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CONTENTS

When Reginald Was Caroline	Edward S. Van Zile	1
Poeta Non Fit	C. F. R.	38
The Paris Woman	Willis B. Hawkins	39
Diana to Endymion	Theodosia Garrison	57
The First Ocean Yacht Race	Stephen Fiske	59
An Average Girl	Nathan M. Levy	65
Association	Edgar Fawcett	66
The Fierce White Light	Celia Myrover Robinson	67
A Tryst	Phoebe Lyde	69
A New Memory System	Charles Battell Loomis	70
The Voice Within	Julien Gordon	71
Midnight in the City	Clinton Scollard	81
Strephon in Summer	Francis Barine	82
The White Doe	Clinton Ross	83
Recompense	Jasper Barnett Cowdin	85
A Colonial Rose	Charlotte Becker	86
The Striding Place	Gertrude Atherton	87
Metempsychosis	Arthur Stringer	90
The Highwayman	Joe Lincoln	91
Ballade of the Everlasting Amateur	Carlotta Perry	94
Angels Unawares	Will N. Harben	95
My Launch and I	Ella Wheeler Wilcox	103
In Lilac Time	Kate Masterson	104
Old-Fashioned Washington	K. W.	105
A Toast	Anna E. Gumaer	108
The Passing of a Private Bill	Guy Somerville	109
He Had Grown Old in Books	Prince Vladimir Vanuatsky	115
The Waiting of Circe	Alexander Jessup	117
The Original Summer Girl	Carolyn Wells	118
A Flash of Honor	Vance Thompson	119
In the Night	Arthur Ketchum	124
Two in a Boat	Charles Raymond Barrett	125
Song of the Summer Cottager	Ernest DeLancey Pierson	127
The Social Status of Yaphank	Tom P. Morgan	128
The Wandering Diamond	W. J. Thorold	129
Compensation	Rose Robinson	136
Lizzie Maud	Estelle Lambert Matteson	137
When Mabel Goes A-Fishing	Richard Stillman Powell	139
In the Garden	Edwin L. Sabin	140
Mr. Vidaver	Howard Markle Hoke	141
Simulation	W. L. W.	146
Ce Qui Fait le Plus Vite	Leon de Tinseau	147
The Wooing O'	W. Seward Edmonds	149
The Novice	Sylvia Florence	150
The Resurrection of a Conscience	John Winwood	151
The Penance	George Birdseye	155
Jack's Second Trial	Roy Farrell Greene	156
An Automobile Elopement	Alex. Ricketts	157
Ballade of Seasonable Diversion	Frank Roy Batchelder	158
A New Vocation	Douglas Dunne	159
Investigating Tommy	M. S. P.	160

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WHEN REGINALD WAS CAROLINE

By Edward S. Van Zile

Author of "With Sword and Crucifix," etc.

I

But what a mystery this erring mind!
It wakes within a frame of various
powers
A stranger in a new and wondrous world.

—N. P. Willis.

TO begin at the beginning: The tragedy or farce—whichever it may prove to be—opened just a week ago. I turned on my side as I woke last Wednesday morning to look into my wife's face, and lo, I beheld, as in a mirror, my own countenance. My first thought was that I was under the influence of the tag end of a quaint dream, but presently my eyes, or rather my wife's, opened slowly and an expression of mingled horror and amazement shone therein.

"What—what—" groaned Caroline, in my voice, plucking at my—or perhaps I should say our—beard. "Reginald, am I mad—you look—where are you? What is this on my chin—and what have you done to yourself?"

Whether to laugh or swear or weep I hardly knew. The bedroom looked natural, thank God, or I think that at the outset we should have lost our transposed minds even more completely than we had. The sun came in through the window as usual. I could see my trousers—if they were mine—lying across a chair at the further end of my dressing-room. It was all commonplace, natural, homelike. But when I glanced again at my wife, there she lay, pale and trembling, with my face, beard, tousled hair and

heavy features. I rubbed a slender white hand across my brow—or, to be accurate, the brow that had been my wife's. There could be no doubt that something uncanny, supernatural, theosophical or diabolical had happened. While we lay dead with sleep our respective identities had changed places, through some occult blunder that, I realized clearly enough, was certain to cause us no end of annoyance.

"Don't move," I whispered to Caroline, and there flashed before my mind a circus-poster that I had gazed at as a boy, marveling in my young impressionability at the hirsute miracle that had been labeled in red ink, "The Bearded Lady."

"Don't move," I continued, hoping against hope that by prompt measures I might repair the mysterious damage that had been done to us by this psychical transposition. "Shut your eyes, Caroline, and lie perfectly still. Don't worry, my dear. Make your mind perfectly blank—receptive to impressions. Now, we'll put forth an effort together. I'm lying with my eyes closed, and I am willing myself to return to my own body. Do likewise, Caroline. Don't tremble so! There's no danger. Things can't be worse, can they? There's comfort in that, is there not? Now! Are you ready? Use your will power, my dear, for all it's worth."

We lay motionless, blind, silent for a time. That I should gaze into my wife's own face when I opened my eyes again I fondly imagined, for I had always been proud of my force of

will. Caroline, too—as I had good reason to know—possessed a stubborn determination that had great dynamic possibilities.

“Ready!” I exclaimed, presently. “Open your eyes, my dear!”

Horror! There was my wife gazing at me with my eyes and pulling nervously at my infernal beard. As she saw that I was still occupying her fair body, my eyes began to fill, and a man’s hoarse sobs relieved my wife’s overwrought feelings.

“Is it—oh, Reginald!—is it reincarnation, do you think?” she questioned in her misery.

“Ah, something of that nature, I fear, Caroline,” I admitted, reluctantly. “It’s a new one on me, anyway. But it can’t last. Don’t be impatient, my dear. It’ll soon pass off.”

But even as I spoke I knew that I was using my wife’s sweet, soft voice for deception. Whatever it was, it had come to stay—for a time at least.

“I think, Reggie, dear, that, if you don’t mind, I’ll have breakfast in bed.”

Like a flash, Caroline’s remark revealed to me the frightful problems that would crop up constantly from our present plight. Number one presented itself instantly: I had an important engagement at my office at 9:30. If Caroline remained in bed I couldn’t keep it. Then it came to me that if she rose and dressed I should be in no better case. Dressed? She would be obliged to put on my clothes, anyway! What other alternative was there?

“I think, Caroline, dear,” I suggested, gently, “that we’d better wait awhile before we make our plans. It may go away suddenly. A change may take place at any moment.”

“It came in our sleep, and it’ll go in our sleep,” said my wife, confidently, and I was struck by the gruffness that a firm conviction gave to my voice. I had never noticed it when I had been in full and free possession thereof.

“If we could only go to sleep,” I sighed, glancing again at my trou-

sers and suppressing a harsh expletive that arose to my beautiful lips.

“I couldn’t sleep, Reginald. I’m sure of that. I feel a horror of sleep, but I need something. Perhaps—oh, Reggie, it can’t be that!—but I can’t help thinking that I want a—a-cocktail.”

Caroline hid her borrowed face in my great, clumsy hands.

It required an effort of memory for me to put myself into sympathy with her present craving. I hadn’t thought of a cocktail since I had awakened. It was only once in a very great while that I indulged in an eye-opener. But I had been out very late Tuesday night—in fact, it had been this morning before I had reached home from the club—and I was not, upon reflection, altogether astonished at the wish that my poor wife had expressed with such awkward coyness. But to grant her request demanded heroic action, and I hesitated before taking what might prove to be an irrevocable step. If I had left the bed under existing conditions, a temporary psychical maladjustment might become permanent. Then, again, I realized that my little feet felt repelled by the chill that would come to them if exposed to a cold draught that blew through a window open in my—or, rather, Caroline’s—dressing-room.

“Go into the bathroom and take a cold plunge,” I suggested to Caroline, to gain time. “It’s more bracing than a cocktail.”

“You ought to know, Reginald,” she remarked, in my most playful voice.

Her ill-timed jocosity struck me as ghastly.

“Caroline, dear,” I began, “we must beware of recriminations. ‘It is a condition, not a theory, that confronts us,’” I quoted, mournfully. “If we should fall out, you and I—”

“If we only could!” sighed Caroline.

“Could what?” I cried, in shrill falsetto.

“Fall out, Reginald,” she answered,

grimly. "Can't you think of something else to try? Really, it's too absurd! What is the matter with us, Reggie? Are we dreaming?"

I listened intently. The servants were astir downstairs, and through the windows came the clatter of early vehicles and the thin voice of a newsboy crying at eight o'clock the ten o'clock "extra" of a yellow journal. There was nothing in our environment to suggest the supernatural or to explain a mystery that deepened as the moments passed. The external world was unchanged, and—startling thought!—Caroline and I must confront it presently under conditions that were, so far as I knew, unprecedented in the history of the race.

"That's no dream!" I exclaimed, terror-stricken. My wife's maid had rapped, as usual, at the outer door of our apartments. "Good God, Caroline, what shall we do?"

"Tell her I don't want her this morning, Reginald! Send her away, will you? She mustn't see me—yet."

"But my—your—this hair, Caroline? How'll I get it up without Suzanne's help?"

"I'll do it for you," answered Caroline, in a voice that sounded like a despairing groan.

"Look at those hands—my hands, Caroline! You can't dress hair with them. Take my word for that."

Suzanne rapped again, thinking, doubtless, that we were still asleep.

"I'll be there directly, Suzanne," cried Caroline, in my voice.

We turned cold with consternation. What would Suzanne think of this? My reputation in my own household had been jeopardized on the instant.

"Caroline! Caroline! You must pull yourself together!" I whispered. "Have courage, and do keep your wits about you! Act like a man, will you? Keep quiet, now. I'll speak to Suzanne."

With a courage begotten by desperation, I sat erect. Fear and hope had been at war within me as, for the first time since I had awakened, I changed my posture. I had dreaded

the uncanny sensation that would spring from further proof that I was really imprisoned in my wife's body. But I had clung to a shred of hope. It might be that Caroline and I in motion would find the psychical readjustment that had been denied to us in repose. I was instantly undeceived. As I sat up in bed, Caroline's luxuriant dark tresses fell over my shoulders, and I looked down at a lock of hair that lay black against my tapering white fingers. A wave of physical well-being swept over me, and, despite the horror of my situation, my heart beat with a great joy in life. The blood came into my well-rounded cheeks as I recalled Caroline's recent request for a cocktail. What a shame it was that a big, healthy man should want a stimulant early in the day!

"Suzanne!" I cried. "Suzanne, are you still there?"

"*Oui, madame,*" came the maid's voice, a note echoing through it that I did not like.

"I shall not want you for fifteen minutes, Suzanne," I said. "Come back in a quarter of an hour." I felt a cold chill creeping over me, and Caroline's sweet voice trembled slightly. "And may the devil fly away with you, Suzanne!" I muttered, as I fell back against the pillows.

"We've had our sentence suspended for fifteen minutes, Caroline," I said, presently. "But how the deuce am I going to get through my toilet? My French is not like yours, my dear, and you never speak English to Suzanne. It's actually immoral, Caroline, the way I get my genders mixed up in French."

"Oh, don't say that, Reginald!" exclaimed my wife, in a horrified basso.

"Say what, Caroline?" I asked, petulantly.

"That about mixing genders being immoral, Reggie," she fairly moaned. "I'm not immoral, even if—if—if I have got your gender, Reginald. I didn't want it," she added, sternly, "and I can't be held responsible if I

am masculine or neuter or intransitive. My advice to you, Reginald, is not to say much to Suzanne in any language."

I could not refrain from a silvery chuckle, the sound of which changed my mood instantly.

"How often I've said that to you, Caroline!" I remarked, most unkindly.

"I don't gossip with Suzanne any more than you do with your man," growled Caroline, in a tone that hurt me deeply.

My man! Great Lucifer, I had almost forgotten his existence. He would be in my dressing-room presently to trim my beard and make of himself a nuisance in various ways. Jenkins had his good points as a valet, but he was too talkative at times and always inquisitive. I could have murdered Suzanne and Jenkins at that moment with good appetite.

"Caroline," I said, gloomily, "Fate has ordained that you and I, for some reason that is not apparent, must make immediate choice between two courses of action. We can commit suicide—there's a revolver in the room. Or we may face the ordeal bravely, helping each other, as the day passes, to conceal from the world our strange affliction. I have no doubt that while we sleep to-night the—ah—psychical mistake that has been made will be rectified."

My voice faltered as I uttered the last sentence. Neither my experience nor reading had furnished me with data upon which I could safely base so optimistic a conclusion.

"I—I don't want to die, Reggie," muttered Caroline, with a gesture of protest.

"The club *was* rather quiet last night," I remarked, musingly; but my wife did not catch the significance of the words. "Well, if we're to brace up and stand the racket, Caroline, we must begin at once. You must give me a few pointers about Suzanne. I'll reciprocate, of course, and you'll have no trouble in bluffing Jenkins to a standstill. There he is now! Call

out to him, my dear. Don't be afraid of using—ah—my voice. Tell him you are coming to him at once." Unbroken silence ensued.

"Now, Caroline, be a man—that's a good girl! Tell him you'll be out in five minutes."

My wife's stalwart figure was shaking with nervousness.

"Oh—ah—oh, Jenkins," she roared, presently. "Jenkins, go away. I don't want you this morning. Go away! go away! Do you hear me? Go away!"

"Yes, sir," came Jenkins's voice to us, amazement and flunkeyism mingled therein in equal parts. "Yes, sir. I'm going at once, sir."

"Now you have done it, Caroline!" I cried, in a high treble of anger. "Great Scott! how that man will talk down stairs!"

For a moment the sun-lighted room whirled before my eyes like a golden merry-go-round, and I lay there, limp and helpless, awaiting in misery Suzanne's imminent return.

II

My spirit wrestles in anguish
With fancies that will not depart;
A ghost who borrowed my semblance
Has hid in the depth of my heart.
—Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen.

"MADAME seems to be in very low spirits this morning," Suzanne had the audacity to remark to me as she deftly manipulated my wife's dark, luxuriant hair, to my infinite annoyance. She spoke in French, a language that always rubs me the wrong way. I gazed restlessly at the dainty furnishings of Caroline's dressing-room, and remained silent.

Presently Suzanne spoke again. "I hope that madame has received no bad news."

"Great Scott, girl! what are you driving at?" I heard my wife's voice exclaim, and my recklessness appalled me. Suzanne was paralyzed for a moment. I could see her pretty face in the mirror, and it had turned pale on the instant.

"Pardon me, madame," she gasped, "but I—I thought——"

"Don't think!" I cried, crossly. "Tie up my—this—ah, hair, and let me do the thinking, will you?"

Repentance for my harsh words came to me at once. Suzanne stifled a gasp and a sob and continued her work as a *coiffeuse*. I realized that I must control my impulsiveness at once. I had never understood what my friends had meant when they had accused me of a lack of imagination. I had taken pride in the fact that I was a straightforward, two-plus-two-makes-four kind of a man, not given to foolish fancies nor errant day-dreams. I had attributed my success in business to this tendency toward the matter-of-fact, but now, for the first time in my life, I regretted my lack of imaginative power. I must, for my dear Caroline's sake—yes, in the name of common decency—preserve my psychical incognito in the presence of my wife's maid. Suddenly I was startled by hearing my voice in the bathroom uttering something that sounded much like an exclamation of horror. In my consternation I sat erect, listening intently.

"What is the matter, madame?" whispered Suzanne, excitedly. "Monsieur, too, seems out of sorts this morning."

I realized that Caroline had found sufficient courage to set out in quest of the cold plunge that I had advised in lieu of a cocktail. There came the sound of running water from the bathroom.

"Go on, Suzanne," I said, gently. "Get through with this hair of mine, will you? There's nothing the matter. Caroline—Reginald—ah—Mr. Stevens didn't get quite enough sleep, that's all. He's made the spray too cold."

Suzanne's hands trembled perceptibly as she resumed her task.

"There's a note for madame this morning," she said, presently, lowering her voice again, and always speaking her detestable mother-tongue.

"Of course there is," I remarked,

astonished at the maid's manner. "Her—ah—my mail is full of 'em. Who's the note from, Suzanne?"

"Madame is so remote to-day!" murmured Suzanne, helplessly. "Did I not tell madame that he would write to her?"

"A chill ran through my veins, but I made neither sound nor movement. Apparently my wife's maid had become a discreet postmistress, whose good offices it might behoove me to look into.

"I'll read the note later in the day, Suzanne. Are you nearly done with this infernal hair?"

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the girl, but she went no further.

A splash, a groan, followed by a hoarse yell, echoed through the suite.

"Damn it!" I cried, desperately. "Why didn't Jenkins stay here? She—he'll never get dressed!"

"Where is Jenkins, madame?" asked Suzanne, nervously. "Monsieur seems to be excited. And madame—what is the matter with madame?"

The girl's consternation was not strange. Caroline, the *grande dame*, gentle, self-poised, unexcitable, sat before the wide-eyed Suzanne, swearing in a voice that had been fashioned by nature for nothing harsher than a drawing-room expletive.

"Caroline," came my wife's voice, faintly, as if she were talking to herself. It was some time before I realized that she was calling me.

"Yes—ah—Reginald!" I managed to cry, in a trembling falsetto.

"Monsieur seems to want you, madame," said Suzanne, wonderingly. "Where is Jenkins, madame?"

"God only knows!" I exclaimed, desperately. "Down stairs, I suppose, talking through his hat. Send him to me at once, girl."

"Madame! Jenkins? Send Jenkins to you? Madame, I do not comprehend."

"To me? I didn't say to me, did I? Send him to Car—Reginald—Mr. Stevens! Wasn't that what I said? Go, Suzanne! And—wait a minute. If you mention my name to Jenkins—

that is, if you gossip with him coming up stairs, I'll dismiss you this morning. Tell Jenkins to hold his chattering tongue, or he'll get the grand—ah, *manner nayst pah?*"

Suzanne burst into tears, and, instead of obeying my behest, fell, with true French impetuosity, upon her knees at my feet, and, seizing my cold hands, buried her face in them, sobbing hysterically.

"Oh, madame! madame! What have I done to deserve this?" she moaned, in her diabolical French. "Why do you speak to me—treat me—this way? It is so cruelly cruel! Oh, madame, have I not been faithful, discreet, blind, deaf, dumb? Have I ever betrayed even a little, little secret of yours?"

"Caroline!" There was a note of mingled anger and dismay in my voice as it came to me, harsh and unwelcome, from my distant dressing-room, the door of which Caroline had closed.

"I must go to her!" I cried, springing to my feet, and tripping over my dressing-gown as I pushed by the kneeling, hysterical maid. Suzanne grasped what I now believe to have been the hem of my garment.

"Oh, madame, you must not go to him! Monsieur's voice is so wild! I am sure that he is not well. You must rest here, madame! See, I am going. I will send Jenkins to monsieur at once. *Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!* I go, madame! I shall return to you very soon."

Suzanne had really gone, and, pulling myself together by a strong effort of will, I stumbled from the dressing-room, crossed our bedchamber and knocked on the door, behind which I could hear Caroline uttering subdued exclamations in my raucous voice.

"Who's there? Go away! Who is it?" cried my wife, in a panic.

"Don't get rattled, my dear," I called out, in Caroline's sweetest tones. "Suzanne has gone to find Jenkins. Let me in, my dear. I may be able to give you a few tips."

The door flew open, and I saw that Caroline had managed to don my

underclothing. My heavy features displayed the joy that my wife felt at my arrival. I learned afterward that she had been having serious trouble with my linen shirt.

"Oh, Reggie," she exclaimed, making my voice tremble with emotion, "I've had such a horrible time!" She threw my great, muscular arms around her neck, and I felt my beard scratching my—her smooth, delicate cheeks.

"Sit down, Caroline, and calm yourself," I implored her. "This is no time for this kind of thing. We've got but a moment to ourselves. Suzanne has gone to bring Jenkins back."

Caroline shuddered, but said nothing.

"You gave me a terrible shock, my dear," I remarked, calmly. "I feared that some terrible accident had happened to you."

"The very worst has happened, Reggie," she mused, in something like a prolonged growl. "I don't think I'll ever be able to go through with it."

"We've made a bad beginning, Caroline. I'll admit that. But all is not yet lost. Jenkins and Suzanne doubtless imagine that you are merely suffering from a somewhat stubborn and persistent jag."

"How horribly vulgar!" groaned Caroline.

"Don't disabuse Jenkins's mind of the idea," I implored her. "It's hard on you, I'll admit, but it's better than the truth. We can't tell them that we've changed bodies for a time. They'd think us crazy, Caroline."

"We will be, Reginald," growled the dismayed giant, seemingly on the verge of tears. "If I were only dressed I wouldn't be so frightened. But you are such a clumsy creature, Reggie."

I sprang to my feet. I thought I heard voices in the lower hall.

"They're coming, Caroline. Don't say much to Jenkins, but, if you think of it, my dear, swear at him softly now and then. It'll quiet his suspicions, if he has any."

As I started to leave the room I turned sharply and eyed my own face searchingly. Imitating Suzanne's voice as well as I could, I said:

"There's a note for madame this morning. Did I not tell madame that he would write to her?"

Bitterly did I regret my untimely sarcasm. Caroline, white to the lips, tottered where she stood.

"Reginald!" she cried, in a deep, horror-stricken voice that could have been heard throughout the house and in the street outside.

Rushing back, I helped her toward a chair.

"It's all right, Caroline," I said, in dulcet, pleading tones. "Don't mind it, my dear. I am sure that you will be able to explain the—ah—little matter wholly to my satisfaction." Then a thought flashed through my mind that was like a cold *douche*, and I added: "And don't forget about Jenkins, my dear. Don't encourage him to talk. And, above all, don't believe anything that he may say. He's a most stupendous liar."

With that I hurried back to Caroline's dressing-room just in time to seat myself before Suzanne, panting from haste and excitement, rushed into the room.

"Jenkins, madame," she cried, wringing her hands, "Jenkins is a villain, a rascal, a scoundrel." The girl appeared to have a long list of opprobrious French epithets in her vocabulary.

"Calm yourself, Suzanne," I said, coolly. "You have sent Jenkins to monsieur?"

"Alas, madame, he refused to obey me unless I agreed to kiss him. The horrid, degenerate, unprincipled English beast! *Mon Dieu!* I could not kiss him, madame."

"Curse the man's devilish impudence!" I exclaimed, while Suzanne stared at me, her pretty mouth wide open in amazement.

"You say such queer things to-day, madame!" she murmured, presently, resuming her duties in a melancholy way. "What will madame wear for breakfast?"

Her question startled me. My mind endeavored, without much success, to recall Caroline's morning costumes.

"What's the matter with her—ah—my plum-colored—ah—tea-gown?" I asked, recklessly.

"Madame is jocose—facetious," remarked Suzanne, pretending to laugh. I reflected bitterly that I could not see the joke.

"You have such excellent taste, Suzanne," I said, proud of my cleverness. "Tog me out in any old thing. But it must be warm and snug, girl. I have had chills up my back until I feel like a small icicle in a cold wind." Suddenly an inspiration came to me. "Suzanne, you'll find a bottled cocktail in the bedroom closet. Never mind the cracked ice. Pour me out about four fingers and bring it to me at once. Don't stare at me like that, girl! Quick work, now. And—ah—don't let Caro—that is, Mr. Stevens hear you. Go!"

Suzanne, pale with amazement, hurried away to find the stimulant that had become suddenly the one thing on earth that I really desired. Presently she returned, carrying a half-filled cocktail glass.

"Here's how, Suzanne!" I cried, joyously, forgetting caste distinctions in my delight at the opportunity of restoring my waning vitality. I swallowed the smooth concoction at a gulp, Suzanne watching me with a puzzled smile on her disturbed countenance.

"Jenkins is with monsieur," she remarked as she took the empty glass from my white, slender hand. Apprehension clutched at my heart again.

"Does—ah—Mr. Stevens—monsieur—seem to be—ah—quiet?" I asked, eagerly.

"I didn't hear his voice, madame," answered Suzanne, arranging a sky-blue morning-gown for my use. "But Jenkins is talking, talking, talking all the time, madame."

"Damn him for a confounded cockney gas-bag!" I murmured, despondently, but fortunately Suzanne was at that moment busy at the further end

of the dressing-room. I stood erect, impatient of further delay.

"Look here, girl," I exclaimed, "will you quit this fussy nonsense and get me out of here? I've got an engagement at—"

My sweet, velvety voice failed me as I realized that I was again forgetting myself, or, rather, Caroline.

The long-suffering Suzanne was at my side instantly.

"Madame may go now," she said, giving a finishing touch here and there to my hair and costume. I made for the bedroom eagerly, but tripped over my dress, recovered my equilibrium and went on. Suzanne said something to herself in French, but the only words that came distinctly to my ears were:

"Le cocktail! Il est diabolique!"

III

In philosophic mood last night, as idly I was lying.
That souls may transmigrate, methought,
there could be no denying;
So, just to know to what I owe propensities so strong,
I drew my soul into a chat—our gossip lasted long.

—*Béranger.*

It was not wholly unpleasant to find myself facing Caroline across the breakfast-table. There she sat, attired in my most becoming gray business suit, in outward seeming a large, well-groomed man-of-the-world. The light in her—or my—eyes suggested the possibility that she had found compensations for her soul's change of base. If that was the case, Caroline was more to be envied than I was, for, despite the feminine beauty that had become mine for a time, I was wholly ill at ease and disgruntled. My hand trembled and I spilled the coffee that it had become my duty to serve. Jones, our phlegmatic butler, appeared to be politely astonished at my clumsiness and glanced at me furtively now and again.

"Two lumps, Caroline?" I asked, absently. Catching my wife's mas-

culine eye, I felt the blood rush to my cheeks. "Reginald, I mean!"

"Three lumps, and plenty of cream, Caroline," said my wife, with ready wit. What a domineering note there was in my voice when used vicariously! I wondered if Caroline had noticed it.

"You may go, Jones," I said, presently. "I'll ring if we need you."

A gleam of surprise came into the butler's eyes, but he controlled it instantly, and strode from the breakfast-room like a liveried automaton.

"You are not eating, Reginald," said my wife, in a gruff whisper, glancing at the door through which Jones had made his exit. "You must not give way to your nervousness, dear boy. You'll need all your strength before the day is over."

"Gad, you're right—if I can judge by the last hour, Caroline," I remarked, endeavoring by force of will to beget an appetite for toast and eggs. "Just hand me my letters, will you? Here are yours, my dear."

I saw the masculine cheeks redden, but Caroline made no effort to act upon the suggestion that I had thrown out.

"Reggie! Reggie!" she moaned, hoarsely, "is there no help for us? Can't you think of something that will change us back again? It's simply unbearable. Sometimes it makes me laugh, but I almost died before I got out of the bathroom. And Jenkins was simply detestable! You must get us out of this, Reginald, or I warn you I shall read these letters, go down to your office and your club—and enjoy life in your way for a while, my dear."

There was something in all this that I did not altogether like, but I smiled as I said:

"Are you laboring under the delusion, Caroline, that my daily life, filled to overflowing with business cares that you know nothing about, is pleasanter than yours? You can do as you please all day long—see people or deny yourself to them, as you choose. I had noticed a tendency upon your part, my dear, before this—ah—

accident occurred, to complain that your existence was dull, that a man had a happier lot than a woman. It's all bosh, that idea. From the moment when I leave this house in the morning, Caroline, I am a slave to duties that I cannot shirk. I am under a terrific strain all day long. As for you, my dear, you may go and come as you please, see the people you like, and dodge those you detest; take a nap if you're tired, a drive if you're suffocated, a walk if you feel energetic. And you have nothing but petty worries that don't amount to a row of beans. Great Scott! Caroline, what an easy job a woman in your position has!"

Caroline refused to meet my gaze, and I observed with annoyance that my eyes sometimes had a shifty way with them. She had placed one large, relentless hand over my small pile of letters. Presently she said, in a tone that indicated a stubborn spirit:

"You are off the track, Reginald. What I want to know is whether you think that we have exhausted every method for getting out of this queer scrape?"

"Drop that, will you, Caroline?" I exclaimed, petulantly. "I'm no theosophist nor faith-curist. I'm not going to fool with this thing at all. If we get to tampering with it—whatever it is—you may find yourself in Jenkins's shoes and I may be Suzanne or Jones for a change. I'm banking on a readjustment in our sleep to-night. Until then, we'll have to accept the situation as it stands."

"Then I'm going to boss things, Reggie," remarked my wife, firmly. "If I'm obliged to get about in your great, hulking figure, my dear, I'm going to enjoy all the perquisites for the next few hours. I don't believe—I never did believe—that you work half as hard as you say you do, nor that you have such horrible dragons to slay every day before dinner. Then I want you to see for yourself how much leisure I really enjoy. You can stay home and run my affairs, Reggie, dear. I'm going down town to see 'the boys' at work!"

"Good heavens, Caroline, you are joking!" I cried, my delicate hand trembling as I endeavored to raise my coffee-cup to my white lips. "It would be utter madness—what you plan! I'll have to let things slide for to-day. I'll telephone to the office saying that I'm down with the grip. Grip? That's good," I went on, hysterically. "It's just what we've lost, Caroline. But never mind! It's a word that will serve my turn. And then, my dear, we'll pass the day together here. We might get a readjustment at any moment, don't you see, if we stick close to each other. If you're down town—great Nebuchadnezzar! anything might happen to us, Caroline."

"But there's the telephone, Reginald," suggested my wife, coldly. "As soon as I reach your office I'll call you up. If you don't leave the house to-day you'll have me at the end of a 'phone most of the time. And let me tell you, Reggie, you'll need me. I am very much inclined to think, my dear, that you'll wonder, before the day is over, what has become of my sinecure. I am quite sure that you'll not find time for a great many naps."

"If you leave me, Caroline," I said, musingly, "I shouldn't dare to fall asleep. But I really can't believe, my dear, that you seriously contemplate the expedition you have mentioned. You'll have the devil's own time, let me tell you, Caroline. Let me glance at that memorandum-book in your inside coat-pocket. Thanks. Wednesday? To-day is Wednesday. Nine-thirty—Boggs and Scranton. We'll scratch that off. I'm late for that, as it is. Rogers!" To myself I cried: "Lord, she mustn't meet Rogers! I shouldn't have given him my office address."

As I glanced through the day's appointments, item by item, my horror grew apace. Caroline, if she went to my office, was bound to derive a wholly false impression of the general tenor of my life. There would be so many things that would be open to misconstruction! Unimaginative I

might be, but my memoranda enabled me to foretell just what kind of an experience awaited Caroline in my daily haunts. The methods by which a successful business is conducted in New York would puzzle her sorely and place me in a most uncomfortable light.

"It can't be done, my dear," I said presently; and Caroline's sweet voice annoyed me by its lack of an imperative note. It seemed to beat impotently against that stubborn-looking countenance across the breakfast-table. "You'd bungle matters most desperately if I allowed you to go down. As it is, I dread the outcome of my enforced absence. Playing lady to-day will cost me a cool ten thousand, at the very least."

I could see, plainly enough, that what I had said had made very little impression upon my wife. Perhaps she doubted my word or felt confidence in her own business ability. In desperation, I took a new tack.

"I think, Caroline, that, on the whole, it would be much better for you to remain here with me and tell me all about that note to which Suzanne referred. It may take some time, my dear, to get that—ah—little matter straightened out."

My eyes never wavered as I gazed into their depths.

"It's easily explained, Reggie, dear," said Caroline, coldly. "It will take me but a moment. As to your interpretation of what Jenkins has been saying to me—that, of course, is another matter. Your explanations may require considerable time, Reggie, darling."

I dropped my coffee-cup, which went to pieces with its saucer.

"Jenkins?" I cried, in a tone so high that it gave me a headache. "Didn't I warn you that he was a great liar, Caroline? You mustn't believe more than ten per cent. of what he says."

"H'm!" growled Caroline, while she glanced idly at the outside of the envelopes beside her coffee-cup.

"I tell you, Caroline," I went on, feverishly, wondering why I had

grown to hate my wife's voice so quickly, "I tell you, Caroline, that Jenkins is a waif from the School for Scandal. He was valet to Lord Runabout before he came over here. Jenkins's standards, I must say, are low. You know what Runabout is, my dear. Well, Jenkins seems to think that to be a gentleman one must have Runabout's tastes. I was idly curious at first to hear what Jenkins had to say. Naturally, he got a wrong impression, and there you are! Sometimes, Caroline, you'd think, to hear Jenkins talk to me, that I was a wild blade, a dare-devil rake, of the latest English pattern. In certain moods he amuses me; at other times I don't listen to him. But I can readily understand, my dear, what a shock he must have given you. Of course, you couldn't know—I should have told you more about it in detail—that I'm really a hero to my valet. It's not a nice kind of hero, of course, but it's the kind that Jenkins admires. In short, Caroline, dear, while I'm Dr. Jekyll to the world, I'm Mr. Hyde to my man."

"H'm," came my gruff voice again, and there was a smile on my face that aroused my anger. During our five years of married life I had never lost my temper with Caroline. But her present manner, made doubly offensive by the use of my own body as its medium, filled me with rage.

"By the eternal hornspron, Caroline, you must drop that!" I cried, in a shrill treble. "If you say 'h'm' to me again in that cheap actor's manner—I'll—I'll—"

"Get a divorce, perhaps," suggested Caroline, pleasantly. "Come, come, Reginald, you've gone far enough. You have no cause for anger—unless, indeed, your conscience goads you. But I've put up a flag of truce. Suppose we drop this unpleasant subject for the present." Here she calmly stuck my letters into a pocket of my coat. "I'll look these over riding down town. Just ring for Jones, will you, and ask him if the coupé is at the door."

"Caroline! Caroline!" I moaned,

falling back in my chair, limp and hopeless, "you must not—you dare not attempt this mad prank! I tell you, Caroline, that you will regret your foolhardiness to the last day of your life."

"Listen to me, Reginald," said my wife, standing erect and drawing herself up to my full height. "Jones will come to you up stairs for his orders. Think of it, my dear! You can order whatever you like best for dinner. The Van Tromps and Edgerton's dine with us to-night. Don't forget that."

I groaned aloud and felt the tears rushing to Caroline's beautiful eyes.

"This morning," she went on, seemingly in high spirits, "my new ball dress should arrive. Mrs. Taunton—you never liked her, Reggie, but she's really charming—is to lunch with me. Professor Von Gratz will be here at eleven to hear me play Beethoven's Opus 22. He's apt to be severe, but don't mind him, my dear. His bark is worse than his bite." Caroline bent down and touched the bell in front of me.

"Is the coupé ready, Jones?" she asked, as the butler entered.

"Yes, sir."

"Ta-ta, Reggie," cried my wife, in my most playful voice. "I'll call you up by 'phone the moment I reach the office. Hope you'll have a pleasant day. Ta-ta!"

A moment later I sat alone in the breakfast-room, gazing down at my broken coffee-cup and saucer. I regretted their accidental destruction. It would have pleased me now to smash them by design.

IV

No longer memory whispers whence arose
The doom that tore me from my place of pride.

—Whittier.

I HAD had the telephone placed in the library for reasons that need not be given here, and it was to this room that I betook myself after I had recovered from Caroline's cruel exit. I

realized, in a vague kind of way, that the library was not my wife's customary haunt after breakfast, but I lacked the courage to seek a clue to her usual morning habits. That Suzanne would discover me presently in my hiding-place I had no doubt, but I was safe from intrusion for a time, at least, and might find in solitude a poultice for the blows that this deplorable day—always to be remembered as Black Wednesday—had already given to me.

As I seated myself beside a table covered with books and magazines, a feeling of rebellion, not unmingled with envy, came over me. It was a clear, bracing, sunny morning, and Caroline, in my outward seeming, was rolling down town, rejoicing, doubtless, like a bird that has escaped unexpectedly from a narrow cage. A new life lay before her. She had gone forth to see the world, while I, beautiful but despondent, sat trembling, in momentary dread of discovery by Jones or Suzanne. Menaced by a ball-dress, a music teacher, Mrs. Taunton and various unknown household duties, my mind exaggerated the miseries of my situation. Unworthy passions agitated my throbbing bosom. A longing for vengeance, a mad desire to make Caroline regret her base desertion of the man whom she had vowed to love, honor and obey, swept through me. It would go hard with me, indeed, if some opportunity for punishing my errant spouse did not present itself during the long day that confronted me.

With great presence of mind, despite my agitation, I had brought Caroline's mail into the library with me. Should I open it? Why not? She had carried off my letters with a piratical nonchalance quite consistent with her present high-handed methods of procedure. It was only fair that I should dip into her correspondence at my leisure. But I feared, just now, any further shock to my nerves, and sat motionless, gazing listlessly at the little pile of notes addressed to Caroline. Suddenly a thought came into my mind that sent the blood rushing through my veins. Was it not more

than probable that my library contained a few volumes dealing with the occult sciences? At all events, I was sure that I owned several books relating to Oriental philosophy. Then there was Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia" at my disposal, and, if I became impatient of research, I could look up "Reincarnation," "Transmigration" and kindred topics in the encyclopædia.

But what had become of my courage? Great as was my curiosity regarding the strange psychical displacement that had made me practically a prisoner in my own home, I feared to take steps that, while they might increase my erudition, might also deprive me of all hope of the night's readjustment.

"I'd better leave it alone," I murmured to myself, despondently. "My very ignorance of this kind of thing may prove to be my salvation in the end. I'm up against it, there's no doubt of that. And the queer thing about it all is that I'm not more astonished at what has happened. It didn't hurt a bit! It was like taking gas. You wake up in a dentist's chair, and the only tooth you knew you possessed has gone. I wonder, by the way, if it would pay to consult a doctor—some specialist in nervous disorders? I could use an assumed name, and—Bosh! I haven't the sand to do it. And it might lead to an investigation as to my sanity. Great guns, girl! You here again?" The last words I spoke aloud, gazing upward into Suzanne's pale, disturbed face.

"I am so worried about madame," said Suzanne in French, glancing nervously around the library, as if she sought in my environment an explanation of her mistress's eccentricity. "Would it not be well for madame to come up stairs and try to get a nap?"

"A nap!" I cried, in a vibrant treble. "Not on your life, girl! I'm up for all day, you may bet on that. Get me the morning papers, Suzanne. And—wait! Where's Jenkins?"

Suzanne gazed at me in surprise.

"He's eating his breakfast, madame."

"Bring me the papers, and then tell Jenkins to take a day off. Tell him he may go as far away as Hoboken if he wants to. He needn't return until to-morrow."

Suzanne glided from my side with a quick, silent movement that reminded me of a black cat.

A wild, fleeting hope seized me that Jenkins would carry the girl away with him, but presently Suzanne entered the library again.

"Jenkins sends his thanks to madame, and will take a holiday, after reporting to monsieur at his office," said my pretty gadfly, glibly, placing the morning newspapers beside me.

"Confound his impudence!" I exclaimed, and I saw at once that Suzanne considered me "no better."

"And now, girl, what next? Jones, I suppose."

"Yes, madame. He is awaiting your pleasure outside the door."

At that moment Jones entered the library.

"You called me, madam," he said, pompously, magnificent as a liar. "Your orders, madam?"

"We have guests for dinner, Jones," I remarked, bravely.

"Yes, madam. How many?"

"Four, Jones. Six at the table, that is. Cocktails to start with, Jones, and serve my best wines—freely, do you understand? I want you to give us a dinner to-night, Jones, that'll—make a new man of me," I murmured under my breath.

"Yes, madam," said the butler, respectfully, but I certainly caught a gleam of delight in his heavy eyes. "You give me *carte blanche*, madam?"

"Throw everything wide open, and let 'er go, Jones," I cried, with enthusiasm. Caroline should see that I know how "to provide."

Jones bowed, more, I believe, to conceal his astonishment than for mere ceremony, and turned to leave the room.

"Jones," I called, before he had disappeared, "if you talk to Jenkins before he leaves the house I shall discharge you."

The butler turned, with a flush in

his face, and gave me a haughty stare. Then he said, recovering his machine-made humility:

"Yes, madam. Your orders shall be obeyed." With that he was gone.

"Go to the 'phone, Suzanne," I said at once, "and call up 50X, Rector. When you've got 'em let me know."

Suzanne was too nervous to accomplish this task, and I was forced to go to her assistance.

"Hello!" I heard Caroline's voice crying presently, and it warned me to be careful.

Standing at a 'phone, it was hard for me to remember that I was far from being quite myself.

"Who's this?" came to my ears from 50X, Rector.

"Has—ah—Mr. Stevens reached the office yet?" I asked.

"We expect him every moment. He's late this morning," came the answer in a man's voice. (I had grown very sensitive to sex in voices.) "Who is this?"

"I am—ah—Mrs. Stevens." Suddenly I realized that I was talking to Morse, my head clerk. How he happened to be in my inner office puzzled me. "Anything new this morning, Morse?" I inquired, impulsively. There was a sound that can be described as an electric gurgle at his end of the line.

"Hello," he cried, above a buzzing of the wires that might have been caused by his astonishment. "Are you still there, Mrs. Stevens?"

"Well, rather," I said to myself. Then aloud: "Will you kindly call me up—ah—Mr. Morse, the moment Mr. Stevens arrives?"

"On the instant, Mrs. Stevens," said Morse, deferentially.

Curiosity overcame my discretion.

"How did the market open, Mr. Morse?" I asked, recklessly.

Again that electric gurgle escaped from my startled clerk.

"It seems to be very feverish, madam," answered Morse, evidently recovering his equanimity.

"Naturally!" I exclaimed, feelingly, but I doubt that Morse caught the word.

"Is that all, Mrs. Stevens?" he asked, presently.

"That'll do for the present—ah—Mr. Morse," I said, reluctantly. "Good-bye!"

I returned to my seat beside the reading-table and found Suzanne gazing at me with soft, sympathetic eyes.

"If I had but dared to tell him to unload," I mused aloud, but went no further, for the French girl's glance had become an interrogation-mark.

"Tell monsieur to unload?" murmured Suzanne, who sometimes spoke English when she especially craved my confidence. "But—*mon Dieu!*—monsieur is not—what you say, madame, loaded?"

I broke into a silvery, high-pitched laugh that annoyed me exceedingly. But it was not unpleasant to realize that the girl knew that Mr. Stevens was a gentleman. I felt grateful to Suzanne for her good opinion. A moment later the telephone rang sharply.

"There's Caroline," I said to myself; but I was quickly undeceived when I had placed the receiver to my ear.

"Is that you, Caroline?" I heard a woman's voice saying. "This is Louise. What have you decided to do about those lectures on Buddhism? Will you join the class, my dear?"

"Not in a thousand years!" I fairly shrieked through the 'phone. "Good-bye!"

"More trouble, madame?" asked Suzanne, as I tottered back to my chair. "I am so sorry. Really, I think madame should come up stairs with me and lie down. I will bathe madame's head, and she may drop off for a time."

"Suzanne," I said, solemnly, making a strong effort of will and controlling my temper nicely—"Suzanne, if you suggest a sleep to me again to-day I shall be forced to send you to Hoboken to find Jenkins. What's that? The telephone again? Ah—Mr. Stevens must have reached his office."

I was right this time. If my memory is not at fault, our conversation across the wire ran as follows:

"Hello!"

"Hello!"

Silence for a time and a buzzing in my ear.

"Is that you, Caroline?" from my office.

"You know best—ah—Reginald," in the sweetest tones that I could get in my wife's voice.

"Hello!"

"Hello!" I returned. "Pleasant ride down—ah—Reginald!"

"Do be serious, will you?" gruffly, from the office.

"Tell Morse to sell L stock and industrials at once. Do you get that?"

"I'll have to use my own judgment in that matter, Caroline." My voice came to me through the 'phone with its own stubborn note.

"Great Scott!" I cried, realizing that I was absolutely helpless. "Be careful what you do—ah—Reginald. It's a very treacherous market. For heaven's sake, sell out at once, will you?"

"I must get to work now, my dear," said my wife, gruffly. "There's a heavy mail this morning, and several men are waiting to see me. Mr. Rogers comes in to me at once."

A cold chill ran through me and Caroline's voice trembled as I cried:

"Don't see Rogers—ah—Reginald! I haven't decided yet what answer to give the man. Bluff him off, if you've got a spark of sense left in you. Tell him to call at the office next week."

"Good-bye, Caroline," came my voice to me, remorselessly. "I'll call you up again later. How's your ball dress? Does it fit you nicely? Don't overexert yourself, my dear. You weren't looking well at breakfast. Tata! See you later, Caroline!"

I heard the uncompromising click of the receiver, and knew that my wife had returned to my affairs. As I turned my back to the telephone I felt that ruin was staring me in the face. If Caroline played ducks and drakes with my various stocks I stood to lose half my fortune. What a fool I had been, engaged in a profitable business, to go into speculation! Had it not been for what may be con-

sidered a feeling of false pride I should have sent Suzanne for a cocktail at once. It seemed to me that my masculine individuality exhausted Caroline's nervous energy at a most deplorable rate.

V

Births have brought us richness and variety, and other births have brought us richness and variety.—*Walt Whitman*.

BUTTONS, the hall-boy, was accustomed to sit where he could keep one ear on the 'phone in the library, the other on the bell of the main entrance, and both of them on the voice of Jones, the butler. The library stifled me, and the very sight of the telephone threatened me with nervous prostration.

"Tell Buttons," I said to Suzanne, "to listen to the 'phone, and if—ah—Mr. Stevens calls me up again, to let me know of it at once. Then come to me up stairs. And, Suzanne, say to Buttons that if—what was her name?—ah, yes, Louise—rings me up again to tell her I've got an attack of neuralgia in my—ah—astral body, and that I'm writing to Buddha to ask for his advice in the matter. That'll shut her off for all day, I imagine."

"*Oui*, madame," murmured Suzanne, wearily. She was beginning to feel the effects of a great nervous strain. As I reached the door of the library the effort to carry myself like a lady overcame my momentary infusion of energy.

"Suzanne," I said, "it might be well for you to bring some cracked ice with you. Ask Jones for it. Tell him I have a headache, if he glares at you."

As I mounted the stairs slowly, wondering how women manage to hold their skirts so that their limbs move freely, a feeling of relief came over me. It was pleasant to get away from the floor over which Jones, the phlegmatic and tyrannical, presided. I had lost all fear of Suzanne, but the butler chilled my blood. If Caroline and I failed to obtain a psychical ex-

change to-night Jones must leave the house to-morrow. Suddenly I stood motionless in the upper hallway and laughed aloud nervously. What would Jones think could he learn that he had become unwittingly a horror in livery to a lost soul? The absurdity of the reflection brought a ray of sunshine to my darkened spirit, and I entered Caroline's morning-room in a cheerful mood.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Stevens, but I was told to wait for you here."

A pretty girl confronted me, standing guard over a large pasteboard box that she had placed upon a chair.

"You—ah—have something for me?" I asked, coldly. I was beginning to wonder where Caroline's leisure came in.

"Your new ball-dress, Mrs. Stevens. You promised to try it on this morning, you remember."

"Very well! Leave it, then. I'll get into it later on. I've no doubt it'll fit me like a glove."

The girl stared at me for a moment, then recovered herself and said:

"Madame Bonari will be displeased with me, Mrs. Stevens, if I do not return to her with the report that you find the dress satisfactory. I may await your pleasure, may I not? Madame Bonari would discharge me if I went back to her now."

"Let me see the dress, girl," I muttered, reluctantly. To don a ball-dress in full daylight to save a poor maiden from losing her situation was for me to make a greater sacrifice than this dressmaker's apprentice could realize.

The girl opened the box, and I gazed, awe-struck, at a garment that filled me with a strange kind of terror. There was not a great deal of it. It was not its size that affrighted me; it was the shape of the thing that was startling.

"That'll do, girl," I exclaimed, somewhat hysterically. "Tell—ah—Madame Bonari that this—ah—polonaise is a howling success. I can see at a glance that it was made for me," and added, under my breath, "to pay for."

The girl stood rooted to the spot, gazing at me in mingled sorrow and amazement.

"But oh, Mrs. Stevens," she cried, the tears coming into her eyes, "you will not dismiss me this way? I will lose my place if you do!"

I sank into a chair, torn by conflicting emotions, as a novelist would say of his distraught heroine.

"Do you want me to climb into that thing, here and now?" I gasped.

"If madame will be so kind," murmured the girl, imploringly.

With joy I now heard the tinkling of cracked ice against cut-glass. Suzanne, to my great relief, entered the room.

"Suzanne," I said, courageously, "I will trouble you to tog me out in this—ah—silk remnant. Have you got a kodak, girl?" I asked, playfully, turning toward the astonished young dressmaker. "You're not a yellow reporter?"

"Oh, Mrs. Stevens!" cried the girl, deprecatingly, glancing interrogatively at Suzanne. Perhaps the cracked ice and my eccentric manner had aroused suspicions in her mind.

A moment later I found myself in Caroline's dressing-room alone with Suzanne, who had recovered her spirits in the delight that her present task engendered.

"Madame's neck and arms are so beautiful!" she murmured in French, pulling the skirt of the ball-dress, a dainty affair made of mauve silk, with a darker shade of velvet for trimmings, into position. "Ah, such a wonderful hang! It is worthy of Paris, madame."

"Don't stop to talk, Suzanne," I grumbled. "This is indecent exposure of mistaken identity, and I can't stand much of it; so keep moving, will you?"

"The corsage is a marvel, madame!" exclaimed Suzanne, ecstatically.

"It is, girl," I muttered, glancing at myself in a mirror. "It feels like a cross between a modern life-preserver and a mediæval breast-plate.

Don't lace the thing so tight, Suzanne. I've got to talk now and then!"

Suzanne was too busy to listen to my somewhat delirious comments.

"It is a miracle!" she cried in French. "Madame is a purple dream, is she not?"

"Madame will be a black-and-blue what-is-it before you know it," I moaned. "Does that girl outside there expect to have a look at—ah—this ridiculous costume?" I asked, testily.

"Madame is so strange to-day," murmured Suzanne, wearily. "You are free to go now, madame."

I clutched at the train that anchored me to my place of torture and moved clumsily toward the room in which the young dressmaker awaited me.

"Ah!" cried the girl, as I broke upon her vision, a creature of beauty, but very far from graceful. "Madame Bonari will be overjoyed. The dress is perfection, is it not, Mrs. Stevens? I've never seen such a fit."

"It feels like a fit," I remarked, pantingly. "Suzanne," I called out, desperately, "slip a few cogs in front here, will you? This is only a rehearsal, you know. If I must suffocate at the ball I'll school myself for the occasion. But I refuse to be a pressed flower this morning. Thanks, that's better. It's like a quick recovery from pneumonia. You may go, girl. Give my compliments to Madame—ah—Bonari, and tell her I'm on the road to recovery. Good-morning!"

Suzanne and I were alone.

"A cocktail, girl. Quick, now! Do you think I wanted that ice as a musical instrument? If I ever needed a stimulant, Suzanne, I need one now. Make the dose stiff, Suzanne, for I'm not as young as I was. Do you hear me? Hurry!"

A rap at the door checked Suzanne in full career. We heard the strident voice of Buttons in the hallway.

"Open the door, Suzanne," I cried, nervously, bracing myself for another buffet from fate.

"Mr. Stevens is asking for Mrs.

Stevens on the phone," I heard Buttons say to Suzanne. "He seems to be in a hurry, too."

Suzanne hastened back to me.

"I know the worst, girl! Say nothing!" I exclaimed, petulantly. I must go down stairs in this infernal ball-dress, "and the ordeal before me filled me with consternation." If Jones should find me skulking around his domain in a décolleté dress at this time of day the glance of his arrogant eyes would terrify me. But there wasn't time for reflection, nor, alas! for a cocktail. Caroline was calling vainly to me with my voice through an unresponsive telephone. I must go to her at once. Doubtless she craved immediate advice regarding the manipulation of my margins. Why, oh! why, had I jeopardized my fortune for the sake of quick returns, when my legitimate business was sufficient for my needs?

"I fly, Suzanne!" I cried, as I stumbled toward the hall. "If anybody calls to ask if I'm engaged for the next dance, tell 'em my card is full." Suzanne smiled. "And I wish I was!" I muttered to myself, desperately, as I looked down the staircase and wondered if it would be well to use my mauve train as a toboggan.

How I managed to reach the telephone I cannot say. In the lower hall I caught a glimpse of Jones's self-made face, and just saved myself from coming a cropper. To acquire a firm seat in a ball-dress requires practice.

"Hello!" I shouted desperately through the 'phone. "Is that you—ah—Reginald?"

"Jenkins is here," I heard my voice saying at the other end of the line. "What'll I do with him?"

"Send him to—ah—Hoboken, will you?" I returned, in a shrill falsetto. "But you have the better of it, my dear. He's not a marker to Jones. What have you done with the specialties?"

"Buying! buying! buying!" cried Caroline, in a triumphant basso that froze my blood. "Rogers gave me an inside tip, as he calls it. It was awfully nice of him, wasn't it?"

"Damn Rogers!" I exclaimed.

"Good-bye!" cried Caroline, with righteous indignation, and my attempt to call her back was futile.

My heart was heavy as I made my way, slowly and clumsily, from the library. Buttons, as bad luck would have it, had just opened the front door to a black-eyed, long-haired little man, who carried a roll of music under his arm. As I hesitated, hoping to make good my retreat to the library, Professor Von Gratz—as he proved to be—hurried toward me. If he was amazed at my costume, he managed to control his mobile face and musical voice.

"Oh, madame, I am zo glad to zee you are eager for de lezzon!" he exclaimed, bowing almost down to his knees. "Ve vill haf grade muzic, nicht war? You vill blay de vonderful Opuz 22! Beethoven, de giant among de pygmies, vill open de gates of baradize to us. It vill be beautiful. You are ready, madame?"

My bosom rose and fell with a conflict of emotions. I felt an almost irresistible longing to throw this detestable little foreigner out of the house. The sudden realization that my biceps, etc., were at my office cooled my ardor for action, and I said, presently, marveling at my own ingenuity:

"I regret to say—ah—Professor, that my doctor has put me upon a very slim musical diet. He says that—ah—Beethoven is ruining my nerves. But if you want to sing 'Danny Deever,' come into the music-room. I think I could manage to knock out the accompaniment."

Von Gratz stared at me in most apparent agitation, pulling at his horrid little black goatee with his left hand.

"I vill pid you gute morgen, madame," he gasped, bowing again. "Ven you are much petter, you vill zend for me, nicht war? Gute morgen!"

The gates of paradise were not to be opened to the professor this morning. On the contrary, Buttons, to my great relief, shut the front door behind the hurrying figure of the

master-pianist, whose farewell glance of mingled astonishment and anger haunted me as I mounted the stairs.

"Suzanne!" I gasped, as I tottered into the room in which the girl awaited my return. "Suzanne, unbuckle this chain-armor, will you? It's breaking my heart. That's better, Suzanne. Oh, yes, I'm going to a ball, all right. Or, rather, you're going to bring me one at once."

VI

Oh, my brothers blooming yonder, unto
Him the ancient pray
That the hour of my transplanting He
will not for long delay.

—*From the Persian.*

RELIEVED of Caroline's new ball-dress and having swallowed a cocktail, I was horrified to find a feeling of almost irresistible drowsiness stealing over me.

"Suzanne," I cried, "it is imperative that you keep me awake—even if it becomes necessary for you to do the skirt-dance to drive sleep from my eyelids. Not that I approve of these Oriental vagaries. Far from it, Suzanne. Though I may at present come under that head myself—but *n'importe!* You might assert, plausibly enough, that all this is Occidental. In a certain sense, I suppose that it is. But—Great Scott!"

I sank back in an easy-chair, startled by my own flippancy. The uncanny, inexplicable change that had made me what I was must not be revealed to Suzanne! Was it not enough that I had already driven my maid to the very verge of hysteria? And here I sat, talking recklessly to keep awake, and wearing my secret on my sleeve. Should Suzanne learn the truth from my punning tongue, her mind might become unhinged. In that case, another sudden transposition of identities might take place! Frightful possibility! I must not yield to the inclination creeping over me to indulge in a short nap. Perhaps Caroline's mail would revive me!

And just here I found myself confronted by a difficult problem in

ethics. Despite the fact that my wife, with a heartless disregard of my wishes in the matter, had seized my letters, captured my business office, and assumed the full possession of all my business affairs, great and small, I could not forget that I still remained a gentleman. That Caroline had taken advantage of a psychical mischance to lay bare my inner life before her prying gaze could not excuse my surrender to a not unfounded but, perhaps, unwholesome curiosity.

"Suzanne," I said, presently, and the girl stole softly to my side. "You spoke of a letter that you had received for me. It is—ah—from—ah—?"

"Yes, madame," answered Suzanne, eagerly, but somewhat irrelevantly. "Here it is, madame. It is from him, I feel sure."

I gazed at the envelope with Caroline's brilliant eyes, but I was not thankful for my temporary perfection of face and form. It came to me grimly that beauty may be a nuisance, or even a curse. I lacked the courage to open this note—an unconventional, perhaps lawless, tribute to my wife's power of fascination. There was an air of Spanish or Italian intrigue about the whole affair that shocked me. My imagination, which had developed wonderfully since early morning, likened myself and Suzanne to Juliet and her nurse.

"O, Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?" I exclaimed, somewhat wildly. Suzanne drew back from me nervously.

"Will you not read the note, madame?"

"Anon, good nurse! But if thou mean'st not well, I do beseech thee—"

"*Mon Dieu!*" gasped Suzanne, gazing at me, awe-struck. But I was pitiless.

"Suzanne," I said, firmly, glancing at the note in my hand, the chirography upon which seemed to be familiar: "Suzanne, I am very beautiful, am I not?"

"*Oui*, madame," assented Suzanne, enthusiastically.

"And I love my husband dearly, do I not?"

"Devotedly, madame."

"Then, surely, Suzanne, I should not receive this epistle. What did I do with his—ah—former notes?"

I had made a most egregious blunder. An expression of amazement came into the French maid's mobile face.

"But, madame, this is the first one, is it not? I know of no others, madame."

There was a gleam of suspicion in the girl's eyes. It was evident that, for a moment, she suspected my dear Caroline of a lack of straightforwardness. Impulsively I tore Romeo's note into a dozen fragments.

"There, Suzanne," I cried, in a triumphant treble. "My *alibi* is perfect. Who wrote this note I do not know. What he had to say I do not care. If you can get word to him, girl, tell him that if he comes prowling around my balcony again I'll have—ah—Reginald pull his nose for him. *À bas Romeo!*"

"But, madame," murmured Suzanne, evidently pained by my fliprant fickleness and fickle flippancy, "monsieur, the writer of the note, dines here to-night, you know."

"The deuce he does, girl!" I cried, impulsively making as if to pull my beard, and bruising my spirit against new conditions. "Who are our guests? Edgerton and his wife. It can't be Edgerton. He's not a blooming idjit. Van Tromp? Dear little Van Tromp! It must be Van Tromp. Oh, Van Tromp, Van Tromp, wherefore art thou Romeo? Van Tromp's the man, eh, Suzanne?"

Caroline's maid was red and tearful.

"Madame is so strange this morning," she complained. "It was Mr. Van Tromp's man who brought the note, madame."

My soul waxed gay in Caroline's bosom. I warbled a snatch of song from Gounod's "*Faust*."

"Suzanne," I cried, "gather up the fragments of Romeo's *billet-doux*. Possibly his note is not what I supposed it was. I'll read what the dear

little boy has to say. Thank you, Suzanne. I think that I can put these pieces together in a way to extract the full flavor of Van Romeo's sweet message. What saith the youth? Ha! I have it.

"MY DEAR MRS. STEVENS: Is it presumption upon my part to believe that you meant what you said to me at the Cromptons' dance? At all events, I have had the audacity to cherish your words in my heart of hearts. I am sending you a few violets to-day. If you do me the honor of wearing them at dinner to-night, I shall know that there was a basis of earnestness underneath the words that were as honey to my soul.

"Listen to that, Suzanne," I cried, hysterically. "Is it not worthy of a young poet? I wonder what the dev—what Caro—ah—I said to this—ah—Romeo? Here's richness, Suzanne! I'll wear his flowers—with a string to 'em, eh? We'll have a merry dinner, Suzanne! I told Jones to throw everything wide open. I'll include young Van Tromp in the order. He shall be my special care, Suzanne. Van Tromp's mine oyster! What think you, Suzanne? Should I not quaff a toast to the success of my little game?"

"Madame, I do not understand," murmured the girl, in French. "Madame is feverish. Let me bathe madame's head, and she may get a quieting nap. If you could lose yourself only for an instant, madame!"

"Great Jupiter, Suzanne, will you get that idea out of your head? I don't want to lose myself. On the contrary—but—*n'importe*, as we say when we're feverish. You'll find some cigarettes in the bedroom, girl. Bring 'em to me at once. Don't stare at me that way! If I don't smoke I'll drink another cocktail, and then what'll happen?"

Suzanne shuddered and hurried away. Presently I was blowing smoke into the air, much to my own satisfaction and Suzanne's ill-disguised amazement.

"Tobacco is quieting, Suzanne; soothing, cheerful. It stimulates hope and calms the perturbed soul.

Damn it! what's that? Somebody's knocking, Suzanne. See who it is. If it's anyone for me, tell them that I won't draw cards this morning, but may take a hand later on. Don't stand staring at me, girl! Put a stop to that rapping at once."

"*Mon Dieu!*" groaned Suzanne, as she crossed the room. How much longer she could stand the strain of my eccentricities was becoming problematical. Presently she returned to me, carrying a box of flowers.

"Romeo's violets," I murmured, rapturously. "Tell me, nurse, did Juliet mean what she said to Romeo? Well, rather! I'll wear thy flowers, little boy! What's this? Another note, smothered in violets. Listen, Suzanne! Romeo has dropped into poetry. Listen:

"Go, purple blossoms, the glory of Spring,
Gladden her eyes with thy velvety hue;
What are the words of the song that I sing?
They came to my heart as the dew came to you.

"My love is a flower, my song is its scent;
Let it speak to her soul in the violet's breath!
And my spirit with thee, by a miracle blent,
Shall drink deep of life, of love unto death.

"Take these away, Suzanne! Take them away!" I cried, in a panic. "Haven't I had enough of this theosophical, transmigration idiocy for one day? Take them away! 'By a miracle blent!' 'Ods pistols and coffee! if I got into that little Van Tromp's body through these infernal flowers I could never hold up my head again. What's that, Suzanne? Yes, keep them fresh. Give them water. But don't let me get near them again until I've got my courage back. Perhaps I'll dare to wear them to-night. I can't say yet."

I needed rest. Reclining in my chair I idly watched Suzanne as she moved restlessly about the room trying to quiet her excitement by action.

"Suzanne," I cried, softening toward the maid, "don't look so sad. All will come right in the end. Brace up, girl. 'While there's life there's hope.'"

"Do I look sad, madame? I am very sorry. I will try to be more cheerful, for madame's sake. But if madame could put herself into my place for a moment——"

"There you go again, Suzanne," I exclaimed, testily. "We'll change the subject, girl. What next?"

"I think it might be well for madame to dress for luncheon," suggested Suzanne, nervously. It was evident that she had begun to lose confidence in my intervals of calm.

"Let me think, Suzanne. Somebody lunches with me. Who is it? Oh, yes, Mrs. Taunton. And now I think of it, Suzanne, Mrs. Taunton is little Van Tromp's sister. That's the reason I never liked her, I suppose."

"But madame and Mrs. Taunton seem to be such good friends," remarked Suzanne in French, moving about in a way that filled me with foreboding. It was evident that she contemplated changing my costume at once.

"Appearances are often deceptive, Suzanne," I remarked, feelingly, lighting a fresh cigarette somewhat clumsily. "What are you up to now, girl?"

"Madame must look her best at luncheon," remarked Suzanne, professionally. "Mrs. Taunton has such exquisite taste."

I was not pleased at Suzanne's remark. Mrs. Taunton, an avowed admirer of Caroline, had never disguised the fact that she considered me a non-entity. But fate had vouchsafed to me a great opportunity for proving to Mrs. Taunton that I was not altogether insignificant. Disguised in Caroline's outward seeming I might readily avenge myself for Mrs. Taunton's persistent indifference to my good points. Little Van Tromp had placed a double-edged weapon in my hand.

"Suzanne," I said, gazing grimly at the dress that she had laid out for

me, "before you go further with my toilet, I wish you would make a copy of these verses for me. You write English, do you not?"

Suzanne glanced at me inquisitively.

"Madame knows well that I do," she remarked, mournfully. But the trembling of her slender hand as she grasped Van Tromp's screed to do my bidding augured ill for the copy that she would make of his verses.

VII

Waste not your hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of this and that endeavour and dispute;
Better be merry with the fruitful grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter fruit.

—Omar Khayyám.

I MUST get on more rapidly with my narrative. It has been a great temptation to me to indulge in conjectures and surmises regarding the soul-displacement that may make my story a presentment worthy of attentive consideration from the Society for Psychological Research. But from the outset I have endeavored to resist this inclination and to give to the reader merely a bald statement of facts in their actual sequence. It must be apparent by this time, furthermore, that I am not fitted by education to discuss the uncanny problems begotten by the strange affliction that had befallen my wife and myself. That I have become perforce a sadder and wiser man may well be true, but, despite my practical experience of what may be called instability of soul, I am not in any sense a psychologist. From various points of view, therefore, it seems best that I should eschew all philosophical or scientific comments on the curious phenomena with which I have been forced to deal, leaving, as it were, the circumference of my story to the care of the erudite, and confining my own endeavors strictly to its diameter.

Behold me, then, fresh from Suzanne's deft hands, confronting Caroline's bosom friend, Mrs. Taunton,

across the luncheon-table. Our conversation, if my memory is not at fault, ran somewhat as follows:

"You look flushed and excited, Caroline," said Mrs. Taunton, a large, blond, absurdly haughty woman, strangely unlike little Van Tromp, her poetical brother. "Something has happened to upset you, my dear?"

"Well, rather!" I could not refrain from exclaiming. What the deuce was Mrs. Taunton's given name? If I did not recall it soon she would begin to wonder at Caroline's peculiar bearing. It was not Mrs. Taunton, however, who was driving me toward hysteria. To find myself again in the realm over which the phlegmatic but terrifying Jones presided was to lose confidence in my ability to stem the tide of disaster. Jones was so conservative! Such a radical change as I had undergone would be even more incomprehensible to him than it had been to me. I realized vaguely that I had grown to be supersensitive, and that what I took to be suspicion in the butler's eyes must be a product of my own overwrought nerves. But, struggle as I might against the impression, I could not free myself from the feeling that Jones watched me furtively, questioningly, as if he had gained possession of a clue to a great mystery.

"Tell me all about it, Caroline," urged Mrs. Taunton, sweetly. "If you were not so beautiful, my dear, you would not have so much trouble."

The blood rushed into Caroline's cheeks, and I found myself glaring angrily at Jones, who was serving croquettes to Mrs. Taunton. The latter had displayed the most wretched taste in praising my, or rather Caroline's, appearance before the butler. But Mrs. Taunton evidently looked upon a servant as a mere automaton, not to be considered even in heart-to-heart talks with young women. My growing annoyance made itself manifest in Caroline's voice, as I stammered:

"My—ah—beauty, such as it is, don't you know, is only—ah—skin deep. But my troubles—ah—Jones! Don't be so slow! Spend as much time outside as you can, will you?"

Mrs. Taunton stared at me in amazement, while Jones, showing no signs of emotion, made a most dignified exit.

"What is the matter with you, Caroline?" asked my *vis-à-vis*, anxiously. "I never heard you speak like that before."

An explanation seemed to be due to my guest.

"It's curious, don't you know," I began lamely, again trying to recall Mrs. Taunton's baptismal name, "it's curious—ah—my dear, what an intense repulsion I feel toward that man Jones. It came upon me suddenly. It's intermittent, not chronic, I think, but it's all there, and means business. Did you ever feel that way?"

"Caroline!" gasped Mrs. Taunton, pained surprise resting upon her patrician face.

"It's beneath me, I acknowledge," I went on, feverishly, making an effort to eat a croquette between sentences. "A butler's merely a necessary piece of movable furniture, and should—ah—not arouse a feeling of antagonism. But Jones has got an eye to—ah—induce intoxication."

"Caroline," queried Mrs. Taunton, solemnly, "have you—forgive me, my dear, for the question—have you been taking anything?"

"A fair exchange is no robbery," I remarked impulsively, in my own defense, but Mrs. Taunton's face assured me that I had spoken irrelevantly.

"I should advise a cup of black coffee, Caroline," said my guest, in her iciest tone.

"We'll wait a bit, if you don't mind," I ventured to suggest. "No coffee without Jones. I'm not quite up to Jones at this moment—er—my dear."

Mrs. Taunton held my gaze to hers, and her light gray eyes chilled me. It was evident that little Van Tromp's sister had no poetical nonsense in her make-up. Practical, obstinate, strong-willed she seemed to be, as she endeavored to solve from Caroline's beautiful eyes the mystery of my eccentric demeanor.

"Your sudden and inexplicable

aversion to your butler, Caroline," remarked my guest presently, apparently desirous of soothing my nerves by a poultice of gossip, "reminds me of the lecture upon Buddhism that I heard yesterday morning. An adept from India—Yamama, I think, is his name—talked to us, you know, about our Western blindness, as he called it, to the marvels of soul-sensitivity."

My fork rattled against my plate, and I gazed down in dismay at Caroline's trembling hand. Mrs. Taunton overlooked my agitation and continued:

"He was so entertaining! But it's all absurd, of course. Louise told me that you were going with her to hear him this morning."

"Yes?" I managed to gasp. "She—ah—Louise called me up by the 'phone. I couldn't get away, you see—ah—my dear."

"It's such utter nonsense, don't you know," went on Mrs. Taunton, evidently convinced that the worst was over with me. "I made notes, just for practice. He—the adept, or whatever he was—was a lovely piece of mahogany, with perfectly stunning eyes. I memorized one of my notes. The dear little brownie said—just listen to this, Caroline: 'The Hindu conception of reincarnation embraces all existence—gods, men, animals, plants, minerals. It is believed that everything migrates, from Buddha down to inert matter. Buddha himself was born an ascetic eighty-three times, a monarch fifty-eight times, the soul of a tree forty-three times, and many other times as the ape, deer, lion, snipe, chicken, eagle, serpent, pig, frog—four hundred times in all!' Isn't it all perfectly silly? Good gracious, Caroline, what is the matter with you? Are you faint?"

"Just a bit rocky," I found sufficient nerve to say. "Are you quite sure—ah—my dear—that he said pigs—and—and—frogs?"

Mrs. Taunton caught her breath, as if she struggled to swallow her amazement.

"You ought to be in bed, Caro-

line," she said, severely. "If you could get to sleep, my dear—"

"*Et tu, Brute!*" I murmured, with sardonic playfulness. "Look here—ah—my dear! You find a change in your Caroline, eh? You have suspected me of drinking, and now you imply that I need sleep. I swear that the next person who hints that I'm not up for all day shall hear something to—ah—her disadvantage."

Such talk was madness. Mrs. Taunton very naturally resented my childish ultimatum. She arose from her chair with a cool, calm dignity that shocked me like a cold shower-bath.

"I regret, Caroline, that I find my patience exhausted," she remarked, more in sadness than in anger, transfixing me with her pale-gray eyes. "I shall leave you now, but not in anger. I can see, plainly enough, that you are not yourself."

"Don't you dare to say that in public—ah—Mrs. Taunton," I cried, hotly, fearful that, as it was, Jones might have overheard her remark. Reason assured me that her words were used figuratively, but the undeniable fact that she had hit the target and rung the bell drove me to desperation. Mrs. Taunton gazed at me for a moment in mingled scorn and astonishment and then swept from the dining-room with head high in air and a rustle of skirts that seemed to sweep Caroline into outer darkness.

The next thing that I remember, as the flamboyant romancers remark, was an entrance even more theatrical than Mrs. Taunton's exit. Jones, impressing my errant fancy as Nemesis in the semblance of an imported butler, strode into the room bearing a tray upon which rested a coffee-pot, the aroma from which stirred hope in my heart. Much as I detested Jones, I welcomed the stimulant that he carried toward me. If Mrs. Taunton's disappearance surprised him, he succeeded in suppressing any outward exhibition of emotion.

Realizing for the moment that my fear of the man was unreasonable, I summoned common sense to my aid and said:

"One good bracer deserves another, Jones. Put a stick into my coffee, will you?"

The butler gave me a furtive glance, a cross between an exclamation and an interrogation.

"Brandy, madam?" he asked, smoothly.

When he had fortified my coffee with a dash of fine old French cognac, I looked him straight in the eye.

"Jones," I said, impressively, "Mr. Stevens has complained of you of late. But I don't want you to lose your place. I shall see to it that my—ah—husband becomes reconciled to you, but you must obey my instructions to the letter. To begin with, you are to leave this room at once, close the door, stand on guard outside and allow no one to disturb me until I give you word. If you open the door before I call to you, you leave the house immediately. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, madam," gasped Jones, thrown out of his orbit for once. But he retained sufficient self-control to make a hurried exit, noisily shutting the door behind him.

I swallowed my coffee—and cognac—at a gulp and stumbled toward the sideboard. After a short search I came upon a box of excellent cigars. Presently I was seated at the luncheon-table again, sipping a pony of brandy neat and blowing cigar-smoke into the air. For a glorious half-hour, I reflected joyously, I could enjoy myself in my own way. Glancing over my shoulder, I caught sight of my reflection in the sideboard mirror. Caroline, with a long, black panatella between her beautiful lips, held a pony of brandy poised in the air, with the other hand raised to remove the cigar from her mouth. An inexplicable wave of diabolical exultation swept over me. Bowing to my wife's handsome image—which cordially returned the salutation—I removed my cigar and raised the brandy to Caroline's mouth.

"Here's how, my dear!" I cried, gaily. "No heel-taps!"

Caroline's reflection drank the toast, and the warm glow of good-fellowship

that crept through my veins reconciled me for the time being to my strange, uncanny fate.

VIII

Young and enterprising is the West,
Old and meditative is the East.
Turn, O youth! with intellectual zest
Where the sage invites thee to his feast.
—Milnes.

On the whole, I enjoyed my cigar. The waters of affliction had rolled over me and I basked in the sunshine of peaceful comfort for a full half-hour. Under like conditions, many good fellows of my set would have toyed too freely with the cognac. But I was cautious and conservative as regards the liquor. I glanced at Caroline's face, which wore a humorous smile as it gazed at me from the mirror.

"Spirits," I cried, facetiously, winking at Caroline's reflection, and receiving a winking response—"spirits are to be handled with care, my dear. There's no telling what they may do to us."

At first I derived considerable amusement from the grotesque effects that I could obtain from the juxtaposition of my cigar and Caroline's delicate face. If it was a kind of sacrilege to sit there and watch the smoke issuing from my wife's dainty lips, I comforted my better self with the thought that I was in no way to blame for existing conditions. If the sideboard's mirror at that moment framed a picture that might have been taken from the *Police Gazette*, was I not powerless to alter the decrees of fate? I had come into my wife's butterfly-beauty without first sloughing off my gross chrysalis-habits.

I playfully shook my dainty fist at the accusatory mirror.

"It's no reflection on me," I murmured, jocosely. A sickly kind of smile flitted across Caroline's face, driving me to a stimulant again. I poured out a pony of brandy.

"To drink or not to drink?—that is the question," I soliloquized, observing with satisfaction that Shakespeare tended to remove the expression of

untimely hilarity in my wife's countenance. "O Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?"

A joyful gleam came into Caroline's eyes as I thought of Van Tromp. I swallowed the cognac and presently saw a flush creep into my wife's cheeks. The sight angered me.

"If two or three fingers of old brandy show themselves at once in this—ah—borrowed face of mine," I reflected, "I might as well take the pledge at once. Caroline," I continued, addressing my remarks to the mirror, "I am ashamed of you. If you don't quit this kind of thing, you'll lose your complexion—and what'll poor robin do then? I am ashamed of you, Caroline. I really didn't think that you'd go so far."

It suddenly came to me that I was talking in a most idiotic way, and I turned Caroline's left shoulder to the mirror. Resisting the temptation to follow the changing expressions of her face, I watched the smoke from my cigar as it floated across the luncheon-table or mounted toward the ceiling. At the outset, I derived a good deal of satisfaction from the change of attitude. My thoughts assumed a healthier tendency. The morbid, half-crazy inclinations that my mind had begun to display passed away and something like contentment with the present and hope for the future came gently to me. Even the question that would force itself upon me now and again as to what Caroline might be doing or undoing at my office failed to destroy wholly the pleasurable calm begotten of solitude, cognac and tobacco. I even found myself contemplating Caroline's white, tapering fingers, outstretched to flip the ashes from my panatella, with a satisfaction that was a strange compound of pride and jealousy. I could not refrain from an unworthy sense of delight at the thought that Caroline was being punished for her brazen defiance of my wishes every time she glanced at my hands.

But I had become a creature of changing moods, a prey to errant fancies. As I realized that my cigar

—shrinking reminder of happier days—was nearly smoked out, and that my term of comparative freedom drew toward its end, the fever of impotent rebellion burned in my veins—if they were mine. To a practical, energetic individual, accustomed to having his own way in small matters and great, the recurrent conviction that he has become the plaything of mischief-loving powers concerning which he knows little or nothing is not conducive to long intervals of repose. I was growing restless again, eager for action, but afraid to indulge in it; craving news of Caroline, but lacking courage to obtain it.

Suddenly a startling thought flashed upon my darkened mind, illuminating, convincing, explanatory. Caroline and her friends had been dipping into Oriental philosophy. Was it not more than probable that my wife had deliberately planned a soul-transposition that had ensured her freedom and made me a captive?

The longer I contemplated this supposition, the stronger grew my belief that Caroline had attempted a psychiatric experiment, the success of which accounted for her haughty, domineering manner after breakfast. It was clear enough, now, as I looked back upon the episodes that I have been recording. My wife's horror at the discovery of our soul-transposition had been merely a clever bit of acting. Her seizure of my mail and insistence upon a visit to my office had been parts of a well-laid plan. It was evident that she had become an adept in the theory and practice of transmigration, and had sacrificed me beneath the Juggernaut of her eccentric ambition. If she found the life of a business man attractive, I was at her mercy, doomed to skirts and corsets until she wearied of my career. Furthermore, it was not unreasonable to suppose that, while Caroline had acquired sufficient diabolical power to transpose our identities, she had not gained enough occult wisdom to restore our souls to their respective bodies. If that should prove to be the case, if she was only half-educated

as a psychical switch-tender, the future for me became dark indeed. I could see before me a long stretch of weary, hopeless years, down which I tottered toward a welcome grave, so-laced only now and then by the creature-comforts that I loved, the while Caroline made merry with my affairs. Beset day after day by Suzanne, Mrs. Taunton and other women in various stages of imbecility, I should be driven to desperation at last and bring disgrace, in some form or other, upon a proud name.

And how cleverly Caroline had played her little game! Had I not often complained loudly of the annoyances appertaining to a business man's life? Could not Caroline silence my accusing tongue with the assertion that she had presented me with a life of luxurious leisure, to take up burdens and responsibilities under which I had always grumbled? Had I not often protested against the new woman's efforts to better her condition, on the ground that woman had long enjoyed more special privileges than fell to the lot of man? I was forced to acknowledge that, even if Caroline was responsible for our psychical interchange, I could not remain consistent and utter any very emphatic complaint. She would fall back upon my own propositions and prove conclusively, quoting my remarks, that, whatever may be the case with his soul, it may profit a man to lose his own body.

A hot wave of impotent anger swept through me, and I turned in a rage toward the mirror. The expression that my rebellious soul had thrust into Caroline's face destroyed the last vestige of my self-control. Seizing a carafe from the table, I hurled it at the sideboard, and my wife's face disappeared in a chaos of broken looking-glass.

Horrified at my recklessness, I hurried toward the door as rapidly as my skirts would permit. In the hall stood Jones, motionless, phlegmatic, gazing at me with a calmness that had in it something of superiority.

"Go in there—ah—butler, and

make yourself useful," I cried, angrily, as I brushed past him to seek the library. "Don't be so damned statu-esque!"

A few moments later I had hooked Caroline at the end of a telephone wire.

"When are you coming up town—ah—my dear?" I managed to gasp, with some show of diplomacy.

"Is that you, Caroline?" asked my wife, with my voice, which I was foolishly glad to hear again. "I've got good news for you. I'm twenty thousand ahead on the day—and every transaction is cleaned out."

"Great Scott!" I exclaimed, forgetting my suspicions and rage in the amazement that her words had caused.

"I'll stop at the club on the way up," went on Caroline, in a deep basso that vibrated with a note of intense self-satisfaction. "Have you had a pleasant day? How's Mrs. Taunton? By the way, my dear, Edgerton was here a few moments ago. Mrs. Edgerton has a treat in store for us tonight."

A chill of apprehension swept over me.

"What do you mean—ah—Reginald?" I faltered.

"She went to the lecture this morning, Caroline," explained my wife, glibly. "She is awfully clever, don't you think? She made him promise to look in on us at nine to-night."

"Him? Who's him?" I cried, cold with dread.

"Yamama," answered my voice, exultantly.

"Good God, Caroline!" I yelled through the 'phone, but my wife had cut me off.

Stumbling into a chair, I rested Caroline's aching head upon her moist, trembling hand.

"Yamama!" I murmured, terror-stricken. "He's the chocolate-colored adept that Mrs. Taunton referred to. Pigs! Frogs! He's the scoundrel that put Caroline up to this. He is coming here to look at me! Damn him!"

Excess of emotion had undone me. I felt the hot tears scorching Caroline's cold hand.

IX

Still in dreams it comes upon me that I
once on wings did soar;
But or e'er my flight commences this my
dream must all be o'er.

—*From the Persian.*

As I look back upon it now, that afternoon wears the aspect of a variegated nightmare, from which I could not awaken.

“What will madame wear this afternoon?” Suzanne had asked me when I had returned to my apartments above-stairs.

I kicked viciously at the empty air with one of Caroline’s dainty feet. The time had come, evidently, for Suzanne to change my costume again. Should I take a ride or a walk, or remain at home? If I went out for a ride, I should have only my own bitter thoughts for company. If I took a stroll up the Avenue almost anything unpleasant might happen to me. If I stayed in the house I must receive callers. No one of these alternatives was alluring, but I was forced to choose the latter. For a number of rather vague reasons, I did not dare to cut off my line of communication with Caroline. She had become, as it were, a flying column not yet out of touch with headquarters.

“And she ought to be shot for disobedience to orders,” I mused, aloud.

“Pardon me, madame?” exclaimed Suzanne, interrogatively.

“*N’importe, girl,*” I answered, testily. “I shall remain at home, Suzanne. Give orders down stairs that I have a headache and can receive no one.”

“But madame is looking so much better!” protested Suzanne. “And the débutantes will call to-day. It is madame’s afternoon.”

“Well, do your worst, then,” I grumbled, discontentedly. “Can you get me some cloves, Suzanne?”

An hour later I entered the drawing-room after a perilous descent from the second story, to confront three young women, who, I had gathered from Suzanne, held Caroline in high esteem as a chaperon. I had

committed their names to memory before leaving the dressing-room, but the effort to get down stairs without spraining my wife’s ankles had obliterated from my mind all traces of its recent acquisition. I stood, flushing painfully, gazing into the smiling faces of three handsome, modish girls who were wholly strangers to their vicarious hostess.

“Oh, Mrs. Stevens, what a charming day!”

“How lovely you are looking!”

“Wasn’t the Crompton dance perfectly stunning?”

“Mr. Van Tromp made such a pretty epigram about your costume!”

“Just a moment—ah—girls,” I gasped, seating myself awkwardly, and inclined to lose my temper. “There’s a painful lack of method about all this. Suppose we begin at the beginning. You were saying—ah—my dear—?” I remarked to the calmest of the trio. The latter exchanged puzzled glances with her companions.

“I was speaking of the compliment that Mr. Van Tromp paid to you,” explained the maiden, rather dolefully.

“He’s a bad lot, that young Van Tromp,” I exclaimed, impulsively. “Perhaps I ought not to talk against another man—ah—behind her—I mean his—back, but Van Romeo’s too easy, girls. He writes poetry. I have no doubt that he makes puns. Charming—ah—day, isn’t it?”

My beautiful callers had lost their vivacity. One of them—a pretty little brunette—had grown pale.

“What about the coaching-party, Mrs. Stevens?” the one I took to be the eldest of the three ventured to ask presently.

“It’s all arranged—ah—my dear,” I answered, recklessly. “We’re to have a dozen cases of champagne and a brass band of ten pieces. “I’m up for all day, you see. If little Van Tromp praised my executive ability —ah—girls, he’d have a career open to him. Merrily we’ll bowl along, bowl along—I’m to handle the reins, you know.”

There were now three pallid maidens confronting me. In the eyes of the eldest I saw a gleam of mingled suspicion and fear.

"I must be going," she gasped.

"Don't go," I implored her, overacting my hospitable rôle a bit. There flashed through my mind a scene from a Gilbert-Sullivan opera—"The Mikado"—and I caught myself humming the air of "Three Little Girls from School Are We."

Jones, to my consternation, stalked into the drawing-room, as if about to reprove me for my lack of dignity.

"Pardon me, madam," said my *bête-noir*, pompously, "but Mr. Stevens insists upon your coming to the telephone."

My callers were on their feet instantly. They appeared to be glad of an excuse for leaving me, and, also, somewhat astonished at the butler's choice of words.

"Don't let us keep you a moment," cried the eldest.

"Remember me to Mr. Stevens," urged the little brunette, mischievously.

"Good-bye! We are so grateful to you, Mrs. Stevens," exclaimed the third, with a sigh of relief.

"Be good!" I answered, gaily. "Come again—ah—young ladies. Don't mind Jones. You'll get used to him. Look in next month, won't you? Ta-ta!"

I stumbled over my skirts as I stepped forward, and the little flock of débutantes hurried away in affright, glancing over their shoulders at me in a manner that suggested gossip to come.

"Hello!" I shouted through the 'phone, when I had managed to reach the library. "Is that you—ah—Reginald? Where are you?"

"Yes. This is Reginald," I heard my voice in answer. "I'm at the 'Varsity Club. Charming place. Nice boys here. You seem to be popular, my dear. 'Here's to you, good as you are, and here's to me, bad as I am; but as good as you are, and as bad as I am, I'm as good as you are, bad as I am!'"

"Good Lord—ah—ah—Reginald!" I faltered, horror-stricken.

"Don't worry, Caroline," came my voice, soothingly. "It's all right. I know when to stop. Had any callers? This is your day at home, is it not?"

"I'll send the coupé for you at once—ah—Reginald," I said, with great presence of mind. "Go easy till it arrives, will you?"

"What do you mean to imply, Caroline?" growled my wife, a note of anger in my voice. "I'm going to walk home by-and-by. You needn't bother about the coupé. I hear the boys calling to me. Here's to you, my dear! Good-bye!"

Before I could utter another word Caroline had cut me off, and I turned from the 'phone despondently. For a moment it seemed to me that the library was surrounded by an iron grating and that I wore a ball and chain attached to my legs. Caroline and "the Old Crowd!" I am forced to confess that the hot tears came into my wife's eyes as I seated myself in a reading-chair and found myself face to face with a loneliness that was provocative of despair.

Jones was hot on the scent. He strode into the library and bore down upon me relentlessly, carrying a tray on which rested two calling-cards.

"Mrs. Greene K. Martin, Mrs. Tallbot F. Smythe," I murmured, as I glanced at the cards. "Did you let 'em in, Jones?"

"They are in the drawing-room, madam," said the butler, indifferently.

Caroline's toast came ringing to my ears. "Here's to you, good as you are, and here's to me, bad as I am!" And here I sat, bullied by Jones and the plaything of a lot of light-headed women of all ages. For one wild, feverish moment the thought of revolt darted through my mind. I might faint, or have a fit, and Jones would be forced to dismiss my callers. But I quickly realized that I was not up to a brilliant histrionic effort. Even as it was, I was playing another's rôle with but indifferent success.

Two elderly women, richly garbed,

arose as I reentered the drawing-room.

"I'm so glad to see you—ah—my dears," I said, in a voice pitched to indicate cordiality. One of my callers tossed her head haughtily, while the prim mouth of her companion fell open. This was not encouraging, and I remained silent. We stared at each other for a long, agonizing moment.

"How do you do?" I began again, with much less assurance. "Go away, little girls," kept running through my mind from that diabolical, tinkling "Mikado."

"We are very well, I believe," remarked Mrs. Martin, as she proved to be, coldly. "I think I may answer for Mrs. Smythe's health."

"I am in perfect health," exclaimed Mrs. Smythe, with emphasis, staring at me in a superior kind of way.

"There's nothing like perfect health—ah—my friends," I said, in a high, almost hysterical, falsetto. "Who is it who says that a man is as old as he feels and a woman as old as she looks?"

"Whoever said it, Mrs. Stevens, did us a great injustice," commented Mrs. Martin, with some warmth. "I am as young in spirit as I was ten years ago, but I don't look it."

"No, you don't look it," I hastened to remark, cordially; but my comment was not well received. Mrs. Martin glanced at Mrs. Smythe, and they stood erect on the instant.

"You're not going—ah—my dears?" I cried, thinking it too good to be true.

"You will pardon the liberty that I am about to take, Mrs. Stevens," began Mrs. Martin, sternly, "but it seems only fair to you that we should ask a question before leaving you. You are out of sorts to-day? Not quite yourself, are you?"

"Not quite," I answered, drawing myself up to Caroline's full height and struggling against an inclination to give vent to wild, feverish laughter. "I may say—Mrs.—ah—my dear—that I'm not quite myself. Not quite! It'll pass off. I have every reason to

believe it'll pass off. But you're right. I'm not quite myself."

My frankness, which appalled me as I thought of it afterward, seemed to have a soothing effect upon my callers.

"You really do too much, Mrs. Stevens," remarked Mrs. Smythe, in a motherly way. "You should try to get a nap at once."

"Your nerves are affected," Mrs. Martin added, speaking gently. "You are overdoing things. Did you ever try the rest cure?"

"Yes. I've been giving it a chance to-day," I confessed. "But it doesn't work. I can't sleep in the daytime. Bear that in mind—ah—my dear. Don't talk to me about a nap. As I said to Caroline—ah—Reginald, I'm up for all day. But you know what nerves are, do you not?"

Mrs. Martin again glanced furtively at Mrs. Smythe, and without more ado they swept out of the drawing-room.

I dropped into a chair, a feeling of relief mingled with self-disgust sweeping over me. I realized that I had been making a sad botch of the part that I had attempted to play. At that moment heavy footsteps behind me aroused me from my black-and-white reverie. Two large, hot hands were placed over my eyes, and the end of a beard tickled Caroline's forehead.

"Guess who it is?" I heard my deep voice saying. "Here's to you, good as you are!"

"Caroline!" I exclaimed, conflicting emotions agitating my soul.

"Guess again, little woman," said my wife, playfully, in my voice. "They called me 'Reggie' at the club."

X

We know these things are so, we ask not why,
But act and follow as the dream goes on.

—Milnes.

"Yes, I've had a simply perfect day, my dear," remarked Caroline, frankly, as we left the library to ascend

to our second-story suite. "I've made twenty thousand dollars—by not taking your advice—and as to the 'Old Crowd' at the 'Varsity Club, I think they're really charming. I've been doing a good deal of miscellaneous thinking, my dear, and I'm convinced that women have a great future before them."

"What women?" I cried, impatiently, as I tripped against the top stair and caught my better half by the tail of my coat.

"You'll do better with practice," remarked Caroline, soothingly. "I'm sure you enjoyed the day. Who has been here?"

"That'll keep," I answered, resisting an inclination to tweak my own nose. "Where's Jenkins?"

Caroline indulged in a hoarse chuckle.

"Jenkins has gone to Hoboken. He won't be back for at least a month. I think I can get on without a man. How's Suzanne?"

We had come to a standstill in the upper hall, just outside of the main door to our private rooms.

"How'll you manage to dress for dinner?" I asked, gazing at my flushed, triumphant face with sharply contrasted emotions. I was glad to see it again, but I did not like Caroline's way of using it.

"I'm very quick to learn," answered my voice, tauntingly. "You must admit, my dear, that I've been a success to-day. You don't think that I'm to be overcome by a man's dinner costume?"

A chill ran through me, and Caroline's voice trembled as I said:

"What do you—ah—think I'd better wear to-night? Suzanne'll ask me presently."

A jovial laugh greeted my words. The humorous side of our horrible plight seemed to be always apparent to Caroline.

"You must be sure to do me credit, my dear boy," said my wife, gruffly.

"You've glanced over my wardrobe, have you not?"

The hot blood came into my adopted cheeks at the suggestion.

"I—I've been too—ah—busy to look into the—ah—matter," I faltered. "Damn it, Caroline, don't be so confoundedly superior! I'm crushed and discouraged. That's straight. Give me a word of advice, will you? What shall I wear to-night? I don't want to make a fool of myself before Suzanne."

"Poor Suzanne!" growled Caroline, somewhat irrelevantly, I thought. "She must have had a day of it! Tell her you'll wear the dress I wore at the Leonards' dinner-party last week. You needn't say much about my hair. Suzanne'll know what to do with it."

Her hand, or rather mine, was on the knob of the door, when a hideous and persistent horror that had haunted me for some time forced me to say, in Caroline's most insistent treble:

"Why—oh, why—did you allow Edgerton to ask that infernal Yamama to come here to-night? It was madness, Caroline."

"Call me Reginald," interposed my wife, coolly.

"It was madness, I say—ah—Reginald. It was that—or worse."

My heart beat fast in Caroline's bosom.

"What do you mean?" asked my wife, thrusting my face forward and transfixing me with my own eyes.

"You've enjoyed the day, haven't you?" I asked, my temper overcoming my prudence. "Well, I haven't. I've been driven nearly crazy by a lot of fool women, while you've had the time of your life."

"I don't follow you," remarked my wife, severely.

"That's just it," I cried, angrily. "You lead me, and I'm forced to follow you. I tell you frankly that I've grown suspicious. You've been studying Oriental mysticism. You've been to lectures and séances, and, for all I know, you may be a favorite pupil of this chocolate-drop, Yamama."

My wife drew herself up to my full height and gazed down at me freezing.

"You mean to imply, Mrs. Ste-

vens," she remarked, with studied coldness, "that I was deliberately responsible for what happened this morning, or last night?"

"Don't dare to call me Mrs. Stevens, Caroline," I whispered, shaking with futile rage. "If I have suspected you, have I not had sufficient circumstantial evidence? Mrs. Taunton tells me that this rascally fakir Yamama turns people into pigs, frogs, any old thing. And you've allowed Edgerton to bring him here to-night! I don't believe that you have the slightest desire to—ah—change back again."

My wife laughed aloud in my most disagreeable manner.

"Here's to you, good as you are, and here's to me, bad as I am!" she cried, with most untimely geniality, and, without more ado, threw open the door to our apartments. In the centre of the room stood Suzanne, pale but self-contained, awaiting my advent. For a moment a mad project tempted me. If I rushed down stairs and had a fit in the lower hall, I might escape many of the horrors that the evening threatened to bring with it. But if I took this heroic course a doctor would be called in. On the whole, I preferred Suzanne to a physician.

I realize, clearly enough, that I lack the ability to keep or reject data with the unerring judgment of a professional story-teller. I should like to give to my testimony a somewhat artistic structure, but I am hampered in this inclination by the necessity of following the actual sequence of events. Being neither a novelist nor a scientist, I am in danger of making an amorphous presentment of facts that shall fail either to convince the psychologist or entertain the idle reader of an empty tale. On the whole, I am prone to make sacrifices in behalf of the latter. My natural inclination is toward Art rather than toward Science, and for this reason I shall remain silent regarding the petty episodes of the hour that followed my talk with Caroline. As it is, my narrative is overweighted with

what may be called details of the toilet.

At half after six my wife and I entered our drawing-room under a flag of truce. The annoyances that had hampered Caroline's unaided efforts to don my evening clothes had had a beneficial effect upon her exultant, overbearing tendencies. She was subdued in manner to the verge of gloom.

"Why are you so downhearted, my dear?" I asked. "Don't you like—ah—my appearance?"

"Which appearance?" growled Caroline, glaring at me. "Are the studs in the right place?"

"Of course they are," I answered, cheerfully. "I never looked better, I'm sure. I congratulate you. And Suzanne tells me that this costume is very becoming to you. The one I have on, I mean. Have you noticed, Caroline, what an infernal nuisance pronouns have become? I'm glad our nouns have no gender. What did you say to young Van Tromp at the Cromptons' dance?"

My beard seemed to fairly bristle with Caroline's anger and astonishment.

"Van Tromp!" she exclaimed, in a surly basso. "What has he been doing now? Horrid little thing! He's not one of the boys, is he, my dear?"

I had seated myself with some difficulty, annoyed at Suzanne for lacing Caroline so tightly, but rather pleased, inwardly, at my feminine beauty and Parisian costume. Caroline stood not far away, six feet tall, broad-shouldered, a manly figure in black and white.

"Van Tromp," I remarked, in the soft, musical tones that had at last reconciled me to my borrowed voice, "Van Tromp is a wandering minstrel, a troubadour out of his time, an age-end Romeo, who haunts Juliet's balcony at all hours of the day and night playing a hurdy-gurdy and reciting his own rhymes. Van Tromp is the one bright gleam in a black and starless night. He would atone for a dreary day were not Yamama coming too."

"I don't understand you, Caro-

line," growled my wife, shifting my feet uneasily.

"You haven't told me what Van Tromp said to you at the Cromptons' dance," I said, relentlessly. "I'll return to the subject later on. Now tell me—ah—Reginald, what you know about Yamama. You intimated, unless I am mistaken, that my suspicions as to your collusion with this Oriental fakir were unfounded?"

"Unfounded!" exclaimed my wife, scornfully. "Absurd! ridiculous! Do you imagine that I would choose this clumsy body of yours in preference to mine? Look at me, and then glance at the mirror, my dear. I'll admit that I've had a very enjoyable day. But I assure you I know little more about Yamama than you do. I am very nervous about him. I don't know what he'll do to us. But I have a horrible fear that he will read our secret at a glance."

"If he does—ah—Caroline," I cried, excitedly, "slug him! Never mind about hospitality. Hit him a crack on the nose. You can apologize to Edgerton afterward."

"That's just like a man," grumbled Caroline. "You think you can defeat esoteric Buddhism with your fists. I'm rather ashamed of you, my dear."

I felt the blood coming into Caroline's cheeks.

"It won't do, of course," I murmured, presently. "We must use diplomacy, not force, in dealing with this Oriental nuisance. Perhaps Yamama will find little Van Tromp sufficiently amusing to enable us to escape detection. I'm inclined to think that Van Tromp is the outward and visible sign of a love-sick tadpole. His sister, the débutante, is not so bad. I suppose she'll fall to Edgerton at dinner?"

"We must have a rehearsal, you and I," remarked Caroline, gruffly. "I escort Mrs. Edgerton, of course, and you'll take Van Tromp's arm. You'll like that."

"Do you see these violets—ah—Reginald?" I cried, dramatically, making a gesture toward Van Tromp's floral offering, now bedecking my

corsage. "He sent them to you. What was Van Romeo's little game? You were to wear the violets tonight, if you really meant what you said to him at the Cromptons' dance. As you always mean what you say, my dear, I have hung out the sign of your—ah—veracity, so to speak. There's more to come, of course. There's a poem, for one thing. I'll read it aloud when we get our coffee."

I saw that my heavy face was flushed and that my eyes glowed with anger as I glanced upward at my wife. She strode toward me menacingly, and laid a heavy hand upon her bare shoulder. Seizing Van Tromp's violets, before I could recover from my astonishment, she tore them from their fastenings and hurled them toward a remote corner of the drawing-room.

"You carry a joke too far," she growled, menacingly. "If you dare to read that poem I'll—I'll tell Yamama the whole story when he comes. I know what to say to him, and he'll do what I ask him to do. I give you fair warning."

I fell back in my chair, cold and disheartened. My worst suspicions seemed to be confirmed. Caroline was in league, as I had feared, with that sunburnt fakir from the Far East! At that moment Jones entered the room.

"Mr. and Mrs. Edgerton," he announced, and, an instant later, "Miss Van Tromp, Mr. Van Tromp."

XI

Yesterday This Day's Madness did prepare:
To-morrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair.

Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why.
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

—*Omar Khayyám.*

It is always, under the best of conditions, uncertain how a dinner-party will "go off." People are not unlike the ingredients of a salad-dressing. The smoothness of the dressing de-

pends upon a mysterious chemical affinity that is recognized by the salad-maker but never wholly understood. All the arts are closely related to each other. A dinner-party, a salad-dressing or an epic poem demands creative effort, and is successful in so far as its creator has made an effective fusion of its separate parts.

Caroline had been inclined to believe that her fame as a dinner-giver was no more than her due. She had reached an altitude as a triumphant hostess from which she could make experiments of a more or less interesting kind. She enjoyed bringing together around our board seemingly antagonistic social molecules to see if they would fuse. She had planned to-night's dinner much as a chemist prepares his materials for a novel combination. Edgerton and Mrs. Edgerton, Van Tromp and Miss Van Tromp formed the basis for an experiment that might produce either a perfume or an explosion.

What the result would have been had Caroline's effort not been hampered by a soul-transposition that made many things awkward to us that were unobserved by our guests, I cannot say. A large portion of the function, especially its earlier stages, is a blur and a buzz in my memory. It had been like this from the first, whenever I had come into the butler's sphere of influence. Van Tromp and Edgerton were not especially terrifying. I knew their limitations. But Jones impressed me as a mystery, concealing in a wooden exterior most frightful possibilities for mischief. I did not fully recover my self-control, if such it could be called, until after the fish had been served. By that time the situation in the dining-room was about as follows:

Caroline, playing the rôle of host, was doing nicely, but was, I feared, inclined to over-act the part a bit. Little Van Tromp, a blue-eyed, insignificant-looking man, with a tender mustache, pointed blond beard and too much hair on his head, was low-spirited and inclined to wander in his

talk. He would glance at my corsage, and then cast a reproachful, languishing glance at Caroline's eyes, into which I found it possible, now and then, to throw an expression of coquetry that revived the poet's drooping spirits for a time. Mrs. Edgerton, a handsome mondaine, was always self-poised, animated and self-satisfied. Miss Van Tromp, unlike her sister, Mrs. Taunton, was *petite*, vivacious and rather pretty, but somewhat in awe of her brother's genius. Edgerton was a typical New Yorker of the prosperous type, possessing blood, breeding and a pleasing exterior.

Mrs. Edgerton thought that I looked somewhat fagged.

"I've had such a busy day, don't you know—ah—my dear," I explained, glancing at my face across the table, and flushing at the gleam of merriment that Caroline flashed at me from my eyes.

"You and Mrs. Edgerton really do too much," commented Edgerton, politely. "We are apt to underestimate a woman's cares and burdens, Reggie," he added, addressing Caroline.

"Indeed we are," Caroline asserted, readily, in my deep voice. "I'm inclined to think, Edgerton," she continued, giving a splendid imitation of my most impressive manner, "that we do scant justice to our wives, while we are forever harping upon our own importance."

"Hear! hear!" cried little Van Tromp, playfully. I manfully resisted an inclination to hurl a wine-glass at his too picturesque head.

Mrs. Edgerton smiled at me. "What has happened to Mr. Stevens, Caroline?" she cried, jocosely. "Unless my memory is at fault, I have heard him say that you and I are 'long on leisure and short on work.'"

"An epigram!" piped the poet, rolling his eyes in exaggerated rapture.

"Did I ever make that remark?" I heard my voice asking in surprise. "I'm afraid, Mrs. Edgerton, that you have misrepresented the source of

what Mr. Van Tromp has mistaken for an epigram. It sounds to me, who never said it, more like a Wall street bull."

"I can't bear that," I ventured, in Caroline's merriest tones, and Miss Van Tromp giggled.

"The point at issue, as I understand it," began Edgerton, genially, "is whether Reggie is making a confession. Did you cry 'Peccavi!' old man?"

"You are as great a sinner in this matter as I am," answered Caroline, seriously, looking at Edgerton. "How often have I heard you complain of overwork, my dear fellow! They were saying at the club this afternoon that you seldom reached there before four o'clock."

A flush came into Edgerton's face, and Mrs. Edgerton laughed aloud.

"Betrayed! betrayed!" she exclaimed, gleefully. "Reggie has deserted you, hubbie dear."

"This is absolutely shocking!" cried Miss Van Tromp. "I shall never marry."

"Let us change the subject," I suggested, suppressing a shudder as Jones glided past me. "We have become a horrible warning to our two unmarried guests—ah—Reginald."

"I am not easily frightened, Mrs. Stevens," the poet dared to say, looking at me courageously.

"Discretion is the better part of bachelorhood," I retorted, and Van Romeo collapsed at once.

"I am so excited at the prospect of meeting Yamama," said Mrs. Edgerton, presently. "He says such wonderful things!"

"And does 'em, too," I murmured, under my breath, and flashing a glance at my smiling face across the table.

"What does he say?" asked Miss Van Tromp, with youthful curiosity.

"Oh, I can't begin to tell you," protested Mrs. Edgerton, and then began: "He says that poetry suffices; that he cannot understand why prose was invented."

"Hear! hear!" cried little Van Tromp, with enthusiasm.

"He abhors egotism. Intellectual self-satisfaction is hideous, he says."

"He ought to know," I exclaimed, and Caroline had the audacity to laugh.

"Go on, Mrs. Edgerton," cried the Van Tromps with one voice.

"Yamama tells us that our Western world is not only self-satisfied, but ignorant. We are contented with half-truths. Science makes a discovery, as it imagines, and, behold! it is something that the East has known for ages."

"But how about the famine in India?" asked Edgerton, argumentatively. "If they know so much, these Eastern wise men, why don't they make grain grow in a dry season? They are great frauds, eh, Reggie?"

"I don't agree with you, Edgerton," I heard my voice in answer. "You fail to get their point of view."

"Betrayed again, Edgerton," laughed the poet.

"What's their point of view?" grumbled Edgerton, casting a glance of surprise at Caroline.

"If you believed in reincarnation," explained my wife, in my somewhat overbearing manner, "you would look upon death as merely a stepping-stone to a higher existence. A famine, don't you see, helps a large number of souls up the spiral."

"Mr. Stevens has become a theosophist," cried Mrs. Edgerton, in exaggerated amazement.

"How perfectly lovely," commented Miss Van Tromp, somewhat irrelevantly. I saw Jones pouring wine at the poet's corner, and I thought that his hand trembled. I'm sure that my voice was unsteady as I remarked:

"But—ah—Reginald, what about snakes and—ah—frogs? Starvation is bad enough, but you aren't going up a spiral if you are changed into something that squirms and crawls."

"It's not like climbing a ladder," answered my voice, authoritatively. "You may go down, now and then, but as the ages pass the general trend is upward."

"It's awfully interesting," reflected

Miss Van Tromp, aloud. "But how is it done?"

"It isn't done!" exclaimed Edgerton, almost angrily, "it's only half-baked. Of all the absurd nonsense that is talked this Oriental mysticism is the worst. That's why I was glad to get this man Yamama to come here this evening. I want to prove to Mrs. Edgerton that he's just about as significant as a Bab ballad."

"Do you think that Yamama will be inclined to do—ah—stunts, Mr. Edgerton?" I faltered, catching the butler's eye and wondering why Caroline's toes got cold so easily.

"What do you mean by stunts, my dear?" Caroline asked, using my voice, rather sternly. "Yamama, I imagine, would not understand the word. He is not here to play tricks."

"What is he here for—ah—my dear?" I asked, in a falsetto that was too shrill to be good form. Mrs. Edgerton looked annoyed, and Edgerton said, half-apologetically:

"Really, Mrs. Stevens, I thought that you would be glad to have Yamama come to us to-night. Frankly, I wanted to make a closer study of the man, and your husband assured me that it would be pleasing to you to have him here."

"Don't think me inhospitable and ungrateful, Mr. Edgerton," I began, in Caroline's smoothest manner. "I shall enjoy meeting Yamama, of course. But do you really think that a man who prefers poetry to prose can be trusted?"

Van Tromp gasped and glanced furtively at Caroline. The latter raised her wine-glass, smiled at me gaily, and I heard my voice crying:

"Here's to you, my dear, good as you are!"

"What are you staring at, Jones?" I asked, angrily, turning sharply toward the butler. He continued his task of serving the course without noticing my reproof. My wife and guests were gazing at me in surprise.

"A toast! A toast!" cried little Van Tromp, almost hysterically.

Edgerton laughed aloud. "Let us drink to the mysterious East," he

suggested, like one who bore an olive branch in his hand.

"To the secrets of the Orient and Yamama!" amended Caroline, showing my teeth to me in a cruel smile.

"Yamama! Yamama!" murmured my guests.

As we sipped our wine I glanced at Jones. There was a flush on his phlegmatic face, but he appeared to be paying no attention to anything but his duties.

XII

Then dimness passed upon me, and that song
Was sounding o'er me when I woke
To be a pilgrim on the nether earth.

—*Dean Alford.*

On our return to the drawing-room I found myself annoyed by the attentions of little Van Tromp and appalled by the imminent advent of Yamama. A new and most distressing dread had crept into my errant soul. I had begun to think that I should come to hate my wife, unless she altered at once her mode of procedure. The fear was upon me that she had enjoyed the day's experience sufficiently to tempt her to make existing conditions permanent. Angry as I was with her, I realized that diplomacy was a better tool at present than denunciation.

"I must speak to her at once," I mused aloud, glancing at my manly, patrician, well-groomed outward seeming as Caroline stood at the further end of the room, chatting with Miss Van Tromp and the Edgertons. An exclamation beside me convinced me that little Van Tromp was very wide-awake.

"Shall I take you to her, Mrs. Stevens? There is no sacrifice that I would not make for you. You would go to Mrs. Edgerton?"

"Mrs. Edgerton?" I exclaimed, somewhat dazed for the moment. "No; I was referring to—ah—Reginald. Tell him I want to see him, will you, old man? These infernal skirts are such a nuisance!"

The poet's eloquent eyes recalled me to my senses. He was gazing at me in amazement, evidently wondering if I had drunk too deep a toast to Yamama.

"What a pitiable fate is mine!" murmured Van Romeo, gloomily. "I have been dreaming of this moment for days, and, lo! you destroy my happiness by a word. Chasing a rainbow is so much more delightful than summoning your lesser half!"

"Lesser half, indeed!" I could not refrain from saying, bitterly. "My three-quarters, or more. Look here, Van Tromp, if you don't move more rapidly I shall read those silly verses of yours to Yamama when he arrives, and he'll turn you into a green-and-yellow parrot. Good heavens, man, it's too late! There he is!"

Unannounced and unattended, Yamama glided into the drawing-room. I recognized him at a glance and Caroline's bosom heaved with a conflict of emotions. Little Van Tromp had jumped to his feet.

"Isn't he stunning?" he exclaimed, most unpoetically.

Yamama was, indeed, pleasing to the eye. His light-brown complexion, dark, brilliant eyes and gorgeous costume made a picture that gave an Oriental splendor to our drawing-room. He stood motionless for a moment, half-way between Caroline and me. Suddenly it flashed upon me that I had a duty to perform. Caroline and I reached Yamama at the same time.

"It was so kind of you to come to us," I heard Caroline saying to the adept. "Mrs. Stevens was overjoyed to hear that you had consented to honor us."

Yamama's black, fathomless eyes smiled at me, like deep, dark pools touched by sunshine. A chill ran through me, but I found strength to say, falteringly:

"Glad to see you, Mr.—ah—Yamama. We're so interested—ah—Reginald and I—in Bhesotericudhism! Glad to see you! Aren't we—ah—Reggie?"

I suspected that Caroline chuckled

behind my beard. I am sure that the smile in Yamama's eyes deepened.

We had grouped ourselves around the adept, who stood calm, picturesque, silent, in the centre of the room; the majesty and mystery of the brooding East seeming to fill the universe of a sudden. It was as if some priceless Oriental rug had become on the instant not merely an ornament, but a creation of infinite psychical significance.

"Doesn't he talk?" Edgerton whispered to me, and I glanced at him reprovingly. Mrs. Edgerton was gazing, awestruck, at Yamama. Presently the adept spoke, in a voice that drove from my fevered mind all thoughts of frogs, snakes and tadpoles.

"Man is composed of seven principles, a unit, but capable of partial separation."

"Well, rather!" I could not refrain from saying, but Yamama ignored my rudeness. He went on impressively, while the group surrounding him listened eagerly, fascinated by his appearance and manner.

"The evolutionary process demands a number of planets, corresponding to the seven principles. On each of these planets a long series of lives is required before a full circuit is made."

"How wildly exciting!" cried Miss Van Tromp. Yamama smiled indulgently. Then he said:

"Before reaching the perfection attainable, every soul must pass through many minor circuits. We are said to be in the middle of the fifth circuit of our fourth round, and the evolution of this fifth circuit began about a million years ago."

"It knocks the Ferris Wheel silly," I overheard Edgerton mutter to himself, and I felt an unaccountable anger at his flippancy.

"I should so like to ask you a question," faltered Miss Van Tromp, and Yamama bowed his inspired head resignedly.

"How soon do we come back after we die?"

"When a man dies," answered the adept, in his low, soft, musical voice, "his ego holds the impetus of his

earthly desires until they are purged away from that higher self, which then passes into a spiritual state, when all the psychic and spiritual forces it has generated during the earthly life are unfolded. It progresses on those planes until the dormant physical impulses assert themselves and curve the soul around to another incarnation, whose form is the resultant of the earlier lives."

"That's easy," muttered Edgerton, at my shoulder.

"I've often felt that way," exclaimed Van Tromp, gazing ecstatically at Yamama.

"Are you making converts?" asked Mrs. Edgerton.

A haughty smile, dark-red streaked with white against a brown background, the whole lighted by two eyes of marvelous power, met our gaze.

"Only by soul itself is soul perceived," answered Yamama, somewhat irrelevantly, I thought.

"You're out, my dear," whispered Edgerton, playfully, to his wife.

"May I trouble you, my dear sir," began Van Tromp, pompously—"may I trouble you to explain to a mind darkened by Occidental erudition why it is that the West is so blind to the mighty truths that you teach?"

"That's a touchdown," muttered Edgerton.

Yamama gazed fixedly at the poet for a time. Then he said:

"The West is not blind to the mighty truths of which you speak. You only imagine that you do not see them. Your great thinkers have taught what we teach. Schopenhauer, Lessing, Hegel, Leibnitz, Herder, Fichte the younger, are with us. Your great poets sing the eternal verities. It is nothing new, that which I bring to you from the East."

"Is there—ah—any reason to fear," I dared to ask, "that when we—ah—change around again—I mean—ah—get reincarnated, you see, that we become—ah—frogs or—or snakes—that is, if we don't—ah—so to speak, stay put?"

My voice had been gradually

ascending Caroline's scale until it hit the interrogation mark in a sharp falsetto. As Yamama's eyes met mine I thought for an instant that I had been struck by lightning. What his strange glance—cutting through me until I knew that I had no secrets left—meant I had no way of determining. I was like a rabbit fascinated by an anaconda.

"There is salvation for him whose self disappears before truth, whose will is bent upon what he ought to do, whose sole desire is the performance of his duty. The root of all evil is ignorance." Thus spake Yamama, whether in answer to my question I could not decide.

"What's the matter with the love of money?" asked Edgerton, in an unconventional tone of voice. His bump of reverence is not well developed.

"'Tis but a small part of the ignorance that enfolds you like a worthless garment," answered the adept, coldly.

"That's one on me," I heard Edgerton mutter, while Mrs. Edgerton laughed softly.

"The Enlightened One," went on Yamama, literally in a brown study, "saw the four noble truths which point out the path that leads to Nirvana or the extinction of self."

"Good eye!" murmured Edgerton, and his wife whispered "Hush!"

As I glanced at Caroline I saw that my face had undergone a change. She was watching the adept with my eyes, but the expression on my countenance was wholly her own.

"The attainment of truth," continued Yamama, "is possible only when self is recognized as an illusion. Righteousness can be practiced only when we have freed our mind from the passion of egotism. Perfect peace can dwell only where all vanity has disappeared."

"I've known that for years," exclaimed Van Tromp, brushing his hair back from his forehead in a self-conscious way.

I had begun to feel faint.

"Won't you be seated—ah—Mr. Yamama?" I asked, hoping that he

would observe my indisposition. Even as I spoke, I lost sight of him. The lights went out of a sudden, and a sharp, exquisite pain shot through me. I was surrounded by a fathomless gloom, as if the universe had turned black at a word. I was conscious, but seemingly alone in a dark void. For a moment only was I cognizant of self. Then there came a flash of dazzling light, and I knew no more.

My testimony is at an end. A week has passed since Caroline and I awoke one morning to find our souls transposed. We are still confined to our rooms, suffering, our physician tells us, from acute nervous prostration. But "Richard's himself again!" When we recovered our senses—for Caroline had fainted at the moment when Yamama disappeared from my sight—we found ourselves restored to our respective bodies; but the shock of our psychical interchange had left us physically weak and depressed.

I have not yet had the energy to compare notes with Caroline in regard to our uncanny experiences. But, fearing that my memory might play

me false, I have relieved the tedium of my convalescence by jotting down the foregoing presentment, in the hope, as I have said before, that the data may prove of interest to minds more erudite than mine and my wife's.

Jenkins has returned from Hoboken—or wherever he went—and I have had him remove my beard. It had become a horror to me. Suzanne is very attentive to Caroline, and seems to have recovered her spirits.

One significant fact I have reserved for the last. It has caused me much uneasiness, not unmixed with a sense of relief. Jones has not been seen since the night of our weird dinner-party. No trace of him has been found. I have advertised for a butler, but have not yet received an application that appealed to me in my present supersensitive condition. What I want is a butler as unlike Jones as possible. Unfortunately, he was a pattern of his kind. But I hate the very thought of him, and so I shall drop my pen at this point and watch Suzanne and Caroline through the open door. I think I shall try to get down to the club to-morrow to see the boys.



A DIFFICULT PLAY

THE new pupil had intelligently played and counted two lines of whole-notes and half-notes. Then she looked in despair at the bottom of the page, where some innocent quarter-notes were corralled, sighing: "Oh, dear, I'll never be able to play those golf-sticks!"



STEPS IN ART

DABBERTON—I'm to paint Narcissus Noodletop's \$1,000 dog.

SPREADER—How does that happen?

DABBERTON—Oh, he tried me on his own portrait, and liked it first-rate.

POETA NON FIT

IN Thessaly! In Thessaly!
 Four antique hills look down on me;
 No other place in any nation
 Is quite so fit for inspiration!

By Ossa's crusted ridge I sit,
 Or to Larissa, smiling, flit,
 Or scale the height of Pelion airy,
 Armed with a classic dictionary.

But lo, the willing pad in hand
 Ne'er fills with novel verse well-scanned;
 Howe'er I strain my brain of iron,
 I only plagiarize from Byron.

Anon I climb Olympus' mount,
 To tap its world-notorious fount,
 Well minded, ere 'tis time for dinner,
 To finish a poetic winner!

They said locality inspired,
 But with no poesy I'm fired;
 They only jabbered hocus pocus,
 There's naught divine about a *locus*.

And, as I scan the *Æ*gean Sea,
 My thoughts turn to gastronomy,
 And while descending from Olympus,
 I trust, at supper, that they'll shrimp us.

L'ENVOI

For what are pads without a mind?
 But mere encumbrances, I find,
 And mental pabulum is shoddy
 Compared to that which feeds the body.

C. F. R.



SAGACIOUS PRECAUTION

MR. WILEY—It is reported around that I am engaged to the widow.
 MISS INNOCENCE—Have you denied it?
 MR. WILEY—Of course not. I don't want to have to marry her.

THE PARIS WOMAN

By Willis B. Hawkins

A DOCTRINAL CHAPTER

IN WHICH A MAN LIES DOWN, RISES TO HIS ELBOW, SITS UP, STANDS UP AND, MEANWHILE, TALKS

HERE were entertaining books in the library of Mr. Herbert Thurston's New York home. There was also a big, broad, comfortable leather lounge. These invited Edward Landor. As he entered the room he discovered his sister, Mrs. Thurston, seated at what a furniture advertisement would call her *escriatoire*.

"Pardon me, Blanche." He turned back.

"Don't go, Ned. I am only scribbling regrets to a luncheon." She pressed a blotter on the writing and left it there. "I want to talk with you."

"Nothing momentous, I hope," said he. "I am grumpy this morning."

"You are grumpy every morning."

"Yes; I smoke too much." He took a cigarette from his case.

"And therefore?"

"I am going to quit—" he ticked a match on his heel—"next New Year."

"Next doomsday!"

"No; I may take to smoking again on that day."

"Weakling! You will never quit. You haven't the stamina. If ever a man needed a wife to look after him—"

Edward laughed. "Blanche, you are a genius. You glide from any other topic to that one as smoothly and as swiftly as Milton's angel fell."

He stretched himself luxuriously on the yielding lounge. "But," he continued, "we may as well have it out here and now. Know, then, my dear sister, and know all men by these presents, that I, Edward Vanalstine Landor, shall never marry."

"And why?"

"Because I shall never find an available woman who would meet my requirements."

"What kind of a woman does my very fastidious lordling demand?"

"A slave, an absolute slave."

"Gracious! I fear my brother absorbed queer notions in the Orient."

Edward smiled lazily through a dense cloud of smoke that seemed to exude in a reluctant way from every pore of his face and hung in graceful circles about his head; for he was none of your busy smokers that puff, puff, puff, blow, blow, blow as if impatient to be rid of the clinging spirit of sweet Mistress Nicotine. Besides, he was too much of a gentleman to smite the delicate lady with a blasting breath.

"No, Blanche; there is nothing Oriental about it. I do not want a prisoner—a creature that must be kept behind bolts and bars. I want a woman with a soul so glorious that she would dig her heart out with her finger-nails rather than submit to such bondage; a woman with a spirit so free and a nature so deep that neither hope of reward nor fear of punishment could subjugate her. I want a wildcat, a tigress, all moods and claws and velvet paws."

"And you wish to tame your wildcat in your own selfish way, I suppose?"

"Never! She must be untamable. She must be a constant menace to me and remain forever a puzzle."

"You are becoming amusing, Ned. Pray, how do you hope to enslave this untamable thing?"

"By meeting her, mood for mood, with superior force. When she showed her claws I would—well, I have seen Tabby calmly hold a refractory kitten by the nape and let it claw the air to its heart's content; and Tabby knows a thing or two about unruly kittens. When she came to me in purring mood I should meet her with a tenderness that would make her vow, upon my breast, never, never, never more to be wild and unmanageable. Next day she might be a devil again. No matter; she should find a greater devil on guard over her. I want a wife who can't be neglected; who requires all my thought, all my strength, physical, mental and spiritual; one that I can dominate, not as an easy matter, of course, but only because I exert my every faculty to reign over her; one who acknowledges defeat to-day and renews the attack to-morrow, who must be mastered every day, every hour, all the time—and always in some unexpected way. Such a woman would make life a living actuality, a perpetual tangling and untangling of the skein, a delightful state of surprises, a Summer and a Winter of unpredictable sunshine and snowstorm, tornado and calm, deluge and rainbow. There is a place on the Pacific coast where, they say, the mercury does not in the whole course of the year vary ten degrees from temperate. Think of weather so tediously even that it cannot serve as a topic for conversation! I wouldn't live there for the Commonwealth of California. No more do I want one of your nice, discreet young ladies, trainable or prudently trained to a dead level—a dead *level*—a *dead* level. There! As a Coopered Indian would say, I have spoken."

"So, you would enjoy the sensation of never knowing whether your wife loved you?" Mrs. Thurston asked.

Edward raised himself to his elbow.

"That is the one thing I should always know. Such a woman would be as true as the immutable law that controlled her love. She would be all or nothing to me. I could not guess what her mood would be, but I should know it was a mood of love. I should not know what she would say to me, but I could wager my everlasting existence on what she would say to another man. It is your cultivated hot-house girl—your calm, calculating, 'prudent' creature—who can go down a line of men, embracing each and winking over his shoulder at the fellow beyond."

"And you flatter yourself that no other man could win her from you?"

"I make no such foolish boast. I know only that he could not do it meanly. She would prevent that. A greater master than I might come along; and if he did, she would be all to him and nothing to me. She would be more his slave than she had ever been mine. That is all."

"I don't like that word 'slave,'" said Mrs. Thurston. "A woman may look up to a man and respect him, but—"

"Respect be damned!—beg pardon, Blanche—respect be hanged (which is the same thing in a pink domino)! I don't want a wife's respect. I want her love, her adoration, her worship. I must be her master, her idol, her religion. What is respect? Tom is old; we respect his years. Dick is a giant; we respect his strength. Harry is a scholar; we respect his learning. I want my wife to search higher for something to look up to. She must feel that the soul which has grasped hers is the soul of a god, the omnipotent soul of *her* god! I want her to tremble with unfathomable emotions when she feels my presence. I want her to start when I summon her—start with that instinct of obedience that is the one precious belonging of the true-born slave—start and stop—hesitate, rebel, writhe, struggle with all her might against the magic spell, and, at last, rush, laughing, praying, weeping, in

unspeakable joy, to the arms of her recognized owner."

"Ned," said Mrs. Thurston, excitedly, "you're a perfect brute."

"You flatter me, sister. I am far from perfect."

"You are a brute; nothing less."

"Discriminate, Blanche. There is a wondrous difference in brutes. Now, I shouldn't so much mind being a jolly old lion, lording it over the jungle. But please don't say I am a nice, quiet, domestic brute. Don't offer me at society's auction-block as a patient, halter-broke donkey or a steady, jogging plug, safe for a lady to drive."

Mrs. Thurston closed the door between the library and the adjoining room where her two little daughters were playing with Barbara Kent. "At least, I will not have the children hear any more of your dreadful doctrine."

"It might put something real into their heads—eh, Blanche?—and prevent you from making suitable matches for them. By the way, I suppose you have picked out a proper husband for Barbara? She must be as much as fifteen, and has been with you more than a month."

"Am I so eager a match-maker?"

"Eager? My dear sister, you are voracious, ravenous. You go at match-making as a famished wolf goes at a lamb in the fence-corner."

"An instance, please."

"Well, my case, for instance," Edward responded. "Ever since you made your own 'brilliant' alliance you have worked eight days a week to drag me into an equally brilliant one."

"I have done nothing but for your good, and if you had listened to my counsel you might have been—"

"I might have been as miserable as you are."

"Edward!"

"Come, Blanche, no theatrics now! Let's put away tomfoolery for the moment. A little simple truth, just between ourselves, won't hurt. You are eating your heart, that is what you are doing. There, don't get into a tantrum! You don't look well on a high horse. Come down and con-

fess, like a sensible sister, that you wouldn't live another day with Herbert Thurston if you could get rid of him without scandal."

"Edward Landor, I will not be insulted in my own house, not even by my own brother."

Mrs. Thurston rose indignantly.

"Sit down, Blanche; sit down. Nobody is going to insult you. Nobody knows better than I do how much you need a brother's sympathy. Blanche, I pity you; indeed I do."

This from a younger brother! Mrs. Thurston was purple. "You would better reserve your pity for someone who needs it—your detestable slave, for example!"

Edward rose to a sitting posture. "Come, Blanche," he said, soothingly, "don't be uncivil. Can't you see there is no bitterness in what I say? I know confession is hard, but it is good for the soul, even though the saying be trite. And, after all, yours is only a misfortune of location. If you only lived in Paris instead of New York—"

To Mrs. Thurston there was terrible significance in these words. The color fled from her face. She stood like a Carrara statue. Edward sprang to her side, and, placing a strong arm about her waist, kissed her cheek.

"Come to my room," she whispered, hoarsely, drawing him toward the hall.

"Wouldn't you better take your—er—luncheon regrets with you?" He handed the closely written sheet to her, and she crushed it convulsively in her hand. With his arm still about her, they passed in silence up the broad staircase.

A PARENTHEICAL CHAPTER

IN WHICH CERTAIN PRIMITIVE LAWS PRESUME TO COMPETE WITH LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENTS AND OTHER CONVENTIONS

SEVENTEEN years prior to the conversation just reported, Mr. James Kent, being an ordinary young man,

put on a mask of gallantry for the purpose of wooing and wedding a certain comely young woman, and, having accomplished his ends, proceeded to remove his disguise.

Before marriage he set her upon a lofty pedestal and crowned her a goddess. Servilely he trotted here and there at her command; ostentatiously he shielded her delicate person against even the balmiest of breezes and her fair name against the faintest breath of his fellows' harmless jests; lavishly he filled her days with the fragrance of fresh roses, accompanied by chivalrous phrases that had cost him sleep; and, at last, he groveled at her feet to swear himself her abject and eternal slave. After marriage this ordinary man let her see that the pedestal was of smoke, that her diadem was tinsel, and that his gifts of flowers and flowery speech had been baits to his trap, for men of this common type are ever pot-hunters. To his pasty conscience he accounted for his cold indifference with the coarse comparison that, though a wise man may run to catch a car, only a fool keeps on running after he has overtaken it. So, Mr. Kent, having chased and caught his car, jumped off—jumped off, too, with his face to the rear; and the logical, not to say usual, results ensued.

However, there being no statutory provision against obtaining goods under false pretenses in the matrimonial mart, the State of New York, five years later, declared him to be the aggrieved party and granted divorce to him. Little Barbara, then three years old, being technically Mr. Kent's daughter, was given into his custody; and—to his everlasting credit be it said—he so utterly neglected her that she got some happiness out of life. The outcast mother—unreasoning creature!—set a primitive law of nature above the Revised Statutes and stole her tiny child from its constituted guardian. So, the State, being unable to square this unconventional exhibition of mother-love with a perfectly balanced mind, thrust her into an asylum. Here, whether as a

cause or an effect, she raved for a few months and died a maniac, with her hand upon her broken heart and a prayer upon her pallid lips.

“Poor Mr. Kent!” said sympathetic society on its way to the opera in search of a tragedy. “How he must have suffered!”

“Poor Kent!” echoed sympathetic Wall street; and, fearing that his overwhelming humiliation might drive him to penny-ante or some kindred desperate form of diversion, invited him into its own innocuous little game.

Four years later the metropolis had forgotten Jim Kent, who was now the hired keeper of a game preserve in the Adirondack Mountains owned by his wealthy cousin, Mr. Herbert Thurston, of Fifth avenue.

Little Barbara, during the first year of her mountain life—the eighth of her mortal existence—was left more than ever to her own devices. Her father, engrossed by his new duties, had little time, even if he had had inclination, to look after her. True, he used a rawhide with impartial frequency on his dog and his daughter, but never, in either case, with a higher purpose than that of avenging some offense against himself; and—so various are the natures of animals—one became a cringing cur, skulking the closer to his heels, while the other grew more fearless and intractable.

The story of her mother followed the child from the city with a celerity attainable only by evil report, and the other children of the mountains at once invested it with their own fanciful imaginings. In a night, it seemed, they all learned that Barbara could boil the water of the creek by putting her left great toe into it; and in a week it was known far and wide that she had blasted the tallest chestnut tree in Gilson's Hollow by touching it with that sorcerous toe while flying over it in a thunderstorm. If anybody doubted this, there was the tree itself, shattered and twisted and scorched. Even the beasts and birds of the forest viewed her friendly ad-

vances timidly and from safe distances.

One afternoon, Barbara, rambling in the woods, came suddenly upon a boy at the bend of the path. At sight of her he turned and plunged through the tangled undergrowth, but almost immediately fell, with his foot tightly held in the jaws of a stiff steel trap.

"Go 'way, go 'way!" He scrambled to the limit of the trap-chain as she approached to aid him; for the fear of her witchery was greater than the pain of the biting trap.

Nevertheless, she aided in releasing his mangled foot, and with her shoulder under his and her arm about his body, was serving as his crutch and support when her father overtook them.

"You will stay on the preserve after I've ordered you off, will you?" Kent's rawhide hissed through the air and raised a stinging welt across the lad's pale face.

"Don't, papa!" cried Barbara. "He's hurt. He got caught in a trap."

"So," said Kent, seizing the boy, "you've got traps here, have you?" And the lash whistled with fiercer cruelty.

"Stop that!" Barbara screamed. She had never rebelled in this manner against his punishment of her, but now that the scourge fell upon another her indignation flashed up fiercely. Kent paid no heed to her. "You sha'n't do that!" she shrieked, and, snatching up a stout stick, she struck her father full in the face. Then he released the lad to seize Barbara, and as he cut her with the whip, she shouted: "Run, boy; run."

On the way home Barbara wept bitterly, a fact that should have told her father something else distressed her more than fear of the whipping he had promised; for she had long since cultivated a pride of stoicism that made it well-nigh impossible for his lash to draw tears from her. As from time to time he removed the handkerchief which he held to his injured cheek, and she saw the pur-

pling, painful-looking puff that her wrath had raised there, she burst into fresh paroxysms of grief and pitied him with all her heart. With what tenderness she would then have taken his poor, swollen face in her lap and kissed it and soothed its throbbing pains with her gentle sympathy!

"Oh, papa," she cried. "I am so sorry! I will never, never do so again!"

"You'll be sorrier before I'm through with you," he snarled, tightening his grip on the rawhide.

Barbara stopped with an angry jerk.

"Then I am *not* sorry!" And her eyes flashed hatred through tears that had but now welled from a compassionate heart. She had been misunderstood—and to a woman, young or old, to be misunderstood is an unforgivable sin. She realized that the best of her was beyond his ken, and she despised him.

When they reached home they found that Mr. Thurston, owner of the preserve—and Jim Kent as well—had unexpectedly arrived. As a means of putting an end to his cousin's obsequious greetings, Mr. Thurston asked how Kent had hurt his face.

"I—I—fell against a tree."

"Why, papa!" Barbara exclaimed.

Mr. Thurston laughed. "A man never tells the truth about a black eye. Barbara, who hit your papa?"

"I did, sir."

Kent shot a threatening glance at her and turned to Mr. Thurston with a forced grin.

"Yes; you see, Barbara and I were playing, and she—"

"We weren't playing, either," Barbara interrupted. "He was beating a poor little boy to death, and I hit him with a stick. And," she added, stiffening her little form in righteous defiance, "I'd do it again."

Mr. Thurston's presence protected her. She was not whipped that evening. Soon after supper she went to her room upstairs, ostensibly to go to bed, but really to kneel at the open window with her chin on her palms and look out thoughtfully over the silent, moonlit mountains. Whether

it be due to the mood of the viewer or of the viewed, there are times in the stillness of the night when mountains and forests seem to sleep—just to repose in dreamless sleep. There are other times when the stillness is of an intenser strain; when, as you turn your eye suddenly upon them, the hills and trees seem on the instant to have stopped in the midst of a frolic and to be standing listening, intently listening, as a mother doe, startled in her romping with her fawn, pauses and harks in a tense hush, a thing of living, alert silence. To Barbara, as she knelt by the window, it seemed that the mountains had just been rolling and tumbling in laughter, but had stopped short, just as they lay, at the instant she looked at them. And a tremor of bliss passed over her as she felt a new sense of companionship. Never again could those mountains seem dead rocks to her. They were living, rollicking giants—oh, so strong! and—her friends. The soul of the child had felt its first wild thrill of true sympathy with God and His glorious creation. After that, longings might come, but she could never again be so bitterly alone.

Mr. Thurston and Jim Kent came out upon the porch to smoke in the moonlight. The murmur of their voices and an occasional sentence of their conversation reached her window. They talked long of stables and kennels, then of poachers, and at last, as Barbara, with her little head, drowsed upon her arms across the sill, she heard her father's vehement words: "She's a perfect little devil—just like her mother!" And as she sleepily dropped herself across the bed without removing her clothes, she wondered what sort of thing a perfect little devil might be. Then as the words "just like her mother" floated through her fading consciousness, she wished she had a mother, as other little girls had. Why did she not have a mother? Would she never have a mother? Had she never had a mother? As she drifted farther and farther toward mystic dreamland she seemed to see two big, round, tender eyes looking

down upon her; and she was so very, very sleepy that she could not think whether the tear upon her cheek had fallen there from those soft, brown eyes above her or had started from her own. But, anyway, the strong old friendly mountains were just over there.

Besides his haphazard visits Mr. Thurston generally came in the Fall with a party of men who talked joyously of the flying birds and the fleeing beasts they popped over. Barbara wondered whether a rabbit got more real pleasure out of being killed when running for dear life than when sitting still, perhaps saying his prayers. Still, she vaguely realized a preference for hunters over butchers, though she might not have understood the argument of art's sake.

Each of Mr. Thurston's visits brought some good to Barbara. Besides the books and other gifts in which she found pleasure and profit, she had long walks and talks with him; and he always brought her back improved in mind and temper. She liked Mr. Thurston, and he found her delicately sensitive to kindly influences.

Sometimes, too, in the Summers, Mrs. Thurston came to the preserve for the annual repairs necessary to her constitution prior to another Winter's epidemic of pink teas, green jealousies and other tinctorial morbosities. But Mrs. Thurston was a lady who, in her social, religious and other ways of life, sought to avoid everything of a nature unpleasant to herself; and at the preserve she was more or less oppressed by a sense of duty to Barbara—a persistent sense that she ought to do something for the motherless child. So, as a means of appeasing conscience—which always demands some quality of logic in the excuses we make to it—she tried very hard to hate Barbara; for, of course, if she hated the child, why, to be sure, she was precisely the one who, for the child's sake, ought not to take the child under her wing. And Conscience put on a blank, meditative face and said: "Y-y-e-s; that seems to sound logical."

At last, however, Mrs. Thurston found a new religion—one that could not be satisfied with logical excuses, empty forms and patentable charities—a new religion as old as creation. Something had twanged the strings of her heart and tuned them to a deeper music than her soul had ever heard before—a music so sweet that it saddened her. Then she fled to the mountains with somewhat of the forlorn hope that sent women of old to the nunnery. Barbara now seemed to her to be another child. And even Barbara's mother—was she really so very, very wicked? The thought came set to a low, sad melody in minor.

The result of this latest visit was that Mrs. Thurston took Barbara home with her, resolved that whatever love and wealth could do should be done for the motherless girl, even as for her own daughters.

A COMMONPLACE CHAPTER

IN WHICH NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY HAPPENS, UNLESS IT BE THAT NO LAWS ARE VIOLATED

WHILE Edward Landor enunciated his "dreadful doctrine" in the library, Barbara Kent, seated between the two smaller girls on the floor of the next room, turned the leaves of a book upon her lap, but saw none of the pictures at which she looked. The deep, vibrant tones of his voice came to her not in words, but as a low, musical hum, such as a fitful night-wind sometimes thrums from a string of telegraph wires; and the magnetism with which they were charged thrilled through her being, though she caught not a syllable of their meaning.

"Don't turn so fast," said little Ruth; "we can't see the pictures at all."

Barbara came back to herself, but only for a moment. As the volume of Edward's voice increased with its deepening earnestness, its similitude to the music of the wires grew, and somewhat of the soul-fear that the

night-wind's woo-oo-oo excites possessed her. She wished to run away, yet something like a fascination held her. She was glad when Mrs. Thurston came to close the door, and oh, how angry she was at Mrs. Thurston for closing it! Then, when the voice had been shut away, it seemed to linger in her ears, even as we sometimes think we hear the mellow strokes of a far-off, deep-toned bell long after it has ceased to toll.

In Mrs. Thurston's room upstairs Edward and his sister sat some moments before either spoke. At last Mrs. Thurston asked: "Ned, what do you know?"

"I know your Paris friend," he answered, calmly.

"My Paris friend?"

"Blanche," he said, firmly, "if you are still going to fence I will leave you." He rose.

"No, no, Ned! Don't, don't." She sank to her knees before him and pressed his hand against her face.

Edward raised her to his breast and stroked her hair. "Sister, let us be friends."

She nodded acquiescence as she wept upon his shoulder. Then he led her to a chair and drew her down upon his knee.

"Tell me all about it, Blanche."

She hid her face on his neck. "It began a year ago in a foolish prank," she said. "I answered a 'Personal' merely to see what would come of it. He wrote a letter that interested me, a beautiful letter which a gentleman might write to any lady. I answered it because I wished to read another; I had no interest in the man. His next letter was more beautiful than the first, and the subsequent ones were still more beautiful. They were noble, grand. I did not know that any human being could look so deeply into the heart. In expressing his own thoughts he expressed those that seemed always to have been secretly mine, yet had never taken form in my mind. At times I half-suspected he was a woman, yet I knew that could not be; he understood women too well—understood me too well."

"Go on, Blanche."

Mrs. Thurston was silent for a moment. Then: "You say you know him, Ned?"

"Yes, intimately."

"And he has told you——?"

"The suspicion wrongs him. We were much together. I was often in his rooms. I could not help noting his deep interest in his fair correspondent, and I should have been blind not to recognize her handwriting. Why did you not disguise your hand, Blanche?"

"I did at first. But I could not long continue the deception. It seemed like sacrilege. And I wanted him to know me all and all, my own true self."

"He knows who you are, then?"

"No. Long ago he candidly told me he should conceal his identity, and begged me to conceal mine."

"A man does not ordinarily seek to protect a woman against himself."

"He is not an ordinary man," she answered, proudly.

"Then you know nothing of his antecedents, his position, his appearance even, yet you love him. Blanche, it is almost incredible."

"Yes; I love him." She spoke fearlessly. "I know his great soul. I do not care what his name, his position, his appearance may be. He is glorious, divine. I would go to the ends of the earth for him."

"Would you go to hell for him?"

"Yes," she answered, positively.

"And give up wealth and social position?"

"Yes, yes."

"And your children?"

"Oh, Ned, don't ask me!"

"You would give up your children for him?" Edward persisted.

"I would give up everything, Ned, everything!" She threw herself upon the couch and quivered in a frenzy of tears.

"Good for you, Blanche! I am proud of you." He patted her head. "I am glad I can tell you all about him."

Mrs. Thurston sprang at her brother and clapped her hand over his

mouth. "Not a word, for your life!" she commanded. "When he chooses he will reveal himself to me. Until then I will wait."

"But if he never chooses?"

"I will wait until he does."

"Good again! Blanche, I love you. You are more of a woman than I thought you were."

"Whatever I am he has made me."

As Edward Landor descended the stairs Barbara Kent came into the lower hall. When she saw him she turned back. He did not see her. When he had closed the outer door she stood behind the lace hangings of a front window and watched him walk with light, springy strides down the street. Then she ran to the library and lay upon the big leather lounge with her face buried deeply in the silken pillow.

That afternoon many visitors came and went. Most of them made inquiries concerning Mr. Landor. Oh, no, Mrs. Thurston answered, he had not utterly expatriated himself. Yes, he expected to remain in New York through the Winter, and would probably spend the next Summer in the vicinity.

"So sorry!" said Mrs. Bragdon. "We were going to the Continent next month, daughter and I. We met Mr. Landor in Italy last Winter and enjoyed his company very much, didn't we, daughter?"

Miss Bragdon lowered her eyelids—blushes being no longer left to her discretion—and said, softly: "Yes, mamma; very much." (That was so.)

"Yes," Mrs. Thurston responded, "he has spoken quite rapturously of meeting you." (That was not so.)

"Indeed?" Mrs. Bragdon raised her brows. "I was afraid we had rather bored him. It happened that we went everywhere he did. It must have tired him to see the same faces at every place." (That was so.)

"Ah, but one never tires of looking at *some* faces, you know."

Mrs. Thurston knew the game by heart. She could play it with her eyes shut.

As the Bragdons went away the

mother's double chin was quadruple with smiles. When the door was closed upon them Mrs. Thurston said to herself, contemptuously: "I think I laid it on thick enough that time."

Edward dined with his brother-in-law at a club that evening. As they lingered over cigars and cordial, Herbert Thurston ventured an experimental remark about ladies and lime-lights; and as this did not perceptibly shock Edward, he dropped the plummet deeper and spoke of pretty little ladies and pretty little suppers. Even now Edward did not wince. On the contrary, he confessed that he had done such things in his time. The end of it was that a note went to a certain stage door and a cute little answer came back. At midnight a cosy quartette nipped daintily at small birds and sipped pleasantly of small bubbles. When the night was older the laughter was merrier, for the jests were crisper. Tiny feet whose toe-tips had peeped cautiously from under rustling skirts were not so timid now; and chairs were too abundant. Supple arms were gaily flung aloft. Glasses musically clinked and spilled their sparkling contents. Tempting lips invited kisses. Lissom forms appealed to wild embraces. Little heads tossed jauntily, and cataracts of fragrant hair came tumbling down.

Herbert Thurston enjoyed himself a hundred dollars' worth, and more. He was far from insensible to the charms of Lola Matteson. On the way home in a cab he leaned against Edward and spoke of her as an angel, which hyperbole may have been the result of too many small bubbles. In another cab, going another way, Lola leaned against her professional sister and spoke of Herbert as a possible angel, which hyperbole bore relation to that larger bubble, histrionic reputation.

Even folly may have its uses. In the present case it brought Edward Landor and Herbert Thurston nearer each other. During the following year they were much together and exchanged many confidences. Edward often spoke of a remarkable

woman in Paris, an American—married, yes, but to a man who did not appreciate her worth—a woman with a soul. Herbert was interested. Edward quoted passages from her letters. Herbert listened eagerly and often wet his lips. "By Jove, Ned, she's a marvel! I congratulate you, old fellow."

"An American woman with the Paris education is the thing," Edward maintained. "American birth, to give her heart, and Parisian teaching, to broaden her horizon." There were many such in Paris, he said.

Mr. Thurston began to wish he lived in Paris.

Mrs. Thurston long had wished she lived in Paris.

Edward Landor was pleased with the development of his plan.

A PATHOLOGICAL CHAPTER

IN WHICH A SPORADIC CASE OF HEART FAILURE, COMPLICATED WITH HEADACHE, RESULTS IN AN EPIDEMIC OF NEUROTIC DISORDERS

FOR more than a year Barbara Kent had been as a daughter in the Thurston household. Meantime, Edward Landor came and went with the freedom of a member of the family, but he seldom saw Barbara alone. Perhaps in the later months there had been somewhat of pique in her adroit avoidance of him when no one else was present; for although she felt herself now to be a young lady, Edward persisted in regarding her as the child she had been when she first came from the mountains. But at table, where she sat opposite him, she had many a time been startled by finding herself looking at him with devouring eyes or trembling inwardly under the influence of his magnetic voice. And as often she had felt the heat of humiliation on her cheeks and an appalling fear in her breast—fear not of him, but of herself.

One day Edward found her alone in the library, seated on the big lounge, studying a volume of profound poetry

which he had purchased because so many critics had pronounced it meaningless. Indeed, some had charged that the poet, who was not without fame, had perpetrated the senseless lines as a joke, and was now, doubtless, laughing in his sleeve at a perplexed public. But Edward Landor had found deep meaning in the poems and had not hesitated to champion the poet.

"Do you understand it?" he asked. Barbara confessed that she did not. Edward seated himself close beside her, and as they bent together over the book their cheeks almost touched. He did not know this. His mind was fully occupied with the pleasant task of elucidating the verses. As the hidden grandeur of the poet's thought revealed itself to him again and again, each time in a warmer light, Edward glowed and his voice vibrated with the depth of his feeling. He had no suspicion that Barbara did not comprehend a word he said. He felt her tremble, and was glad that the poetry was thrilling her soul as it thrilled his own. Barbara sat as one under an enchantment. To feel him close to her, his cheek almost against her burning face; to tingle in her finger-tips when his hair touched hers; to catch the subtle perfume of his presence—subtle, yet a palpable perfume all his own; to quaff into her very soul the richness of that voice which seemed to fill all space—this was to be intoxicated, drunk. Then the stupid man rose and walked contentedly away, self-satisfied with having made another convert to his poet's side.

Barbara sat long where he had left her, with the open book upon her lap. Her musing was of the tremendous power within this man—that wondrous reserve force which he seemed never called upon to use. What if he should really exert himself? The thought frightened her, and this time it was fear more of him than of herself. She kissed the page where his finger last had fallen—kissed it submissively, as she might have kissed a chastening rod that had smitten her.

As Edward walked down the street the picture of a singularly attractive face went with him. The last look he had turned on Barbara seemed to have found her suddenly transformed from the bud-child he had known to a bloom-woman whom he had never seen before. There was somewhat of shock in the awakening, and an unreasonable sense of anxiety possessed him. He must see to it that his sister's penchant for match-making did not bring unhappiness to her ward. He even promised himself, with some vehemence, to counsel Barbara against throwing herself away on any of the paper-hearted young witlings who might come fluttering about her. And as he walked far out of his intended course, he tried in vain to think of some man among his acquaintances who was worthy of her.

The next afternoon the two brothers-in-law sat in Edward Landor's room at the club. They were talking of women in general and of the Paris woman in particular. As Edward described her personal attractions Herbert found himself comparing them with those of Lola Matteson. Once he spoke of the actress, but Edward said the two women were not to be mentioned in the same day. Herbert reflected that this might be a matter of taste, and when it came to that, his own was probably as good as Edward's. Yet when Edward read aloud a few of the Paris woman's letters, Herbert wondered whether Lola could have written such sentiments; whether she was capable of an unselfish love for him such as the Paris woman lavished upon Edward. With a view to getting information that might be available for his own use, Herbert asked how Edward had managed to win the woman so completely to him.

"I didn't manage it at all," Edward answered. "Love cannot be managed—not even by a woman, much less by a man. If I had to lay down a rule for wooing a woman, I should say that truth is the most important factor—simple honesty with one's self and with the woman. In this case, for ex-

ample, I have been as single-hearted with her as an anchorite in communion with his God. I have made no plans, attempted no programmes. From the beginning I have let my emotions play at will, have said what I felt at the moment, with no thought of how it would strike her and no care as to whether it were consistent with what I had said before. Since I am never divided between what I wish to say and what it is prudent to say, and since I am never hidden behind conventional politenesses, she knows me for what I really am. And I have a notion that men and women (who are kaleidoscopic creatures by nature) are always most interesting when they are wholly themselves. We men lie abominably to women, not only in words, but in a thousand little ways which, I imagine, they see through. If we teach them to expect us to cheat them we cannot reasonably complain if they retaliate in kind. I believe the ever-varying moods of a man and a woman are sufficient to keep them always new to each other if only they would not wear the masks of conventionality—those same old false-faces that have become stale and tiresome to both."

"There is something in that," said Thurston, meditatively.

When the two men parted Herbert Thurston was full of the inspiration of Edward's words. He felt that a new soul was stirring within him. He believed he, too, was capable of being natural, simple, truthful, and therefore attractive to womankind. He resolved earnestly to try, and the resolution put him on better terms with himself. He spent that evening composing a long letter to Lola Matteson, but when it was completed he put it into his pocket, half-fearful that if she received it she would not understand its deeper meaning. He even fancied he could see her laughing at him.

Mrs. Thurston had set the time for Barbara's "coming out," and had resolved that nothing should be wanting to make the *début* a complete success. Barbara shrank from the ordeal as

she would from a whipping, but the stoicism that her father's lash had taught her helped her to accept without complaint what was to be.

One day, when the preparations were making, she was passing through the lower hall. Edward's hat and overcoat lay where he had carelessly thrown them upon a chair. With a hurried glance about her Barbara snatched up the hat and put her face far into it, filling her being with a long, deep breath of that precious perfume which was a part of his own dear self. Then she seized his overcoat and hugged it tightly to her breast, stroking it as if it were a living thing, passionately kissing the velvet collar that had touched his neck.

Edward Landor stopped on the stairs. His heart leaped and he felt the blood come throbbing to his brain. "Barbara!" he cried, and on the instant regretted the word, for she turned a look of horror on him, gasped and fled.

When Mrs. Thurston went to Barbara's room that evening to learn why she was not at dinner the door was bolted. It was minutes before the rap and call were answered, and when Barbara appeared her head was swathed in towels that partially concealed a pair of very red eyes. That tried and true old friend of every woman, the headache, accounted for all things, as usual, and Barbara was left alone with her humiliating reflections.

The next morning consternation ruled the house. Barbara was gone. She had left a tremulously written note composed of hysterical apologies to Mr. and Mrs. Thurston, vehement protestations of affection and gratitude, but not a word concerning why or whither she had flown. It was inexplicable, incredible, that she had run away—"and at just this time," Mrs. Thurston wailed. Mr. Thurston tentatively suggested a touch of her mother's insanity, but his wife resented this, even to declaring her belief that Barbara's mother never was insane until after she was clapped into the asylum. Everybody

agreed, however, that search must be immediately instituted for the missing girl. Mr. Thurston ordered the coupé, Mrs. Thurston the brougham.

Edward Landor arose that morning in a state of bright-eyed exultation, although (or because) he had not slept a wink. All night he had striven to think coherently of the bewildering incident of the day before. Piece by piece he had patched this and that remembered circumstance together—the times when he had felt her eyes upon him at the table, and wondered if his necktie were awry; the flush he had noted on her face when she had come upon him unawares; the unaccountably sudden development into womanhood that day when they had sat together with the poet—these and many other bits of recollection now had a new significance. And then he knew why he had felt that strange anxiety concerning her future; why he had seemed to have almost a proprietary interest in her.

Edward reached the Thurston home earlier that morning than usual. The news of Barbara's departure surprised him, but did not dash his spirits. He took scant interest in the discussion of ways and means for finding her, but when Mr. Thurston suggested the police he put his foot down solidly against it.

"Ned," said Mrs. Thurston, "you act as if you knew something."

"I think I do," he answered.

"Where is Barbara, then?"

"Probably on her way to the preserve."

"Why? What for?"

"I think—" Edward smiled in a satisfied way as he emphasized the second word—"I think to make ready to become Mrs. Edward Landor."

"Ned, what *do* you mean?"

"Only that Barbara is going to be my wife." He said it as if there could be no two ways about it.

"And you knew she was going, and didn't let me— Ned, that was shabby."

"No, sister; I did not know she was going. If I had known, she

should not have gone. I didn't even know she was going to be my wife until—"

"Well, until—"

"Until she was gone."

When Mrs. Thurston could command her thoughts she said: "Why, Ned, Barbara is a mere child."

"So much the better. I hope she will always remain one. The world shall never have my consent to making an old woman of her."

"But you are almost old enough to be her father."

"I am quite old enough, thank heaven! And since she never had either father or mother, I will be both—and brother and sister and husband and lover."

A ZOOLOGICAL CHAPTER

IN WHICH A MENAGERIE OF INSPIRED WRITERS, BIVALVULAR MOLLUSKS, BEARS, MONKEYS AND OTHER WILD ANIMALS BECOMES EXCITED

THE brougham was sent back to the stable. Edward Landor and Herbert Thurston went away in the coupé.

"Look here, Ned," said Thurston, "you are not concealing any sort of trouble, are you?"

"I am in no mood for concealing anything, Herbert. I want to dance on the housetops and yell my happiness."

"And are you really going to marry Barbara?"

"*Deo volente*, I am."

"When did you ask her?"

"Never."

"Ah, then it is *Deo et Barbara volente*, eh?"

"No. Barbara is willing, God bless her!"

Edward related the incident of the day before.

After a few moments Thurston asked, "How about the Paris lady?"

"I shall submit her case to Barbara."

"You are going to tell Barbara about her?" Thurston was more than surprised.

"Certainly."

"My dear boy, you don't know Barbara. You are staking out ground for a tragedy."

"I am staking out ground for future happiness. Barbara shall decide whether I give the other woman up."

Thurston begged pardon for laughing. "Of course you have no doubt what the decision will be?"

"None whatever."

"And you are prepared to abide by it?"

"Wholly."

Thurston thought the matter over for some time. "Ned," he finally said, "you'd better give the Paris lady to me."

"If women were chattels I might, Herbert."

"No, no; I mean, let me try to win her."

"That is every man's privilege. But frankly, Herbert, you have been educated in a school whose diplomas she does not recognize. It is not your fault that—"

"Don't apologize, Ned. I know what you mean, and I know you are right. But is it impossible for a man to rise above his education?" He drew a paper from his pocket. "May I read this to you, Ned?" With pride of authorship he read the letter he had written to Lola Matteson.

"Did you write that, Herbert?"

"Yes." He was pleased to say so.

"Alone?"

"Not exactly. I had your help. The inspiration was from you."

"No. The inspiration is your own. You have simply written what was in you—merely put yourself honestly on paper. That is a splendid letter, Herbert, worthy to go to any woman."

"I could not send it to Lola. I felt—"

"That's it, exactly. You felt. And you knew she would not. You were right, or my judgment of her is wrong. You glowed with pleasure while you were writing that letter."

"I certainly did."

"You idealized her, and when you came back to earth you found she did not fit the ideal. That is the essential

difference between love and its counterfeit. The woman whom a man really loves always exceeds his ideal."

"I can believe that," said Thurston.

After reflection Edward said: "Herbert, you can win any woman worth winning if you live up to that letter. Suppose we put it to the test? Write to my Paris friend, and I will copy your letter in my hand. Let us see how she takes it."

Thurston was eager for the experiment. "Shall I try to follow your style?" he asked.

"No. Pay no attention to style. The moment you begin that you become a self-conscious, uninteresting thing. Forget style, forget everything. Plunge into the labyrinth and let go the clue-thread. Lose yourself and wander blindly wherever instinct leads."

At the club Mr. Thurston went to Edward's room and began his pleasant task. Edward went to the telegraph office and signed Thurston's name to the following message to James Kent:

"Barbara is on the way to you. Wire me when she arrives."

The rest of the day Edward devoted to despatching business matters and preparing to depart for the preserve as soon as Barbara arrived there. The only matter under debate in his mind was whether he should have the ceremony performed up there or gratify her probable whim for a city wedding. He rather leaned toward the former course.

Herbert Thurston worked most of the day on his letter, and Edward pronounced it capital. Late that night a copy of it was posted, with a preface that told the exact truth in such a manner that its recipient would be sure not to believe it literally. "It is not the first time a woman has been imposed on that way," he confided to his pillow.

The second day brought a message from James Kent. Barbara had not arrived at the preserve.

"We would better see the police," said Mr. Thurston.

"And have the newspapers printing pictures of actresses with her

name under them, and inventing their own salacious reasons for her flight! Never!" Edward would not listen to it.

"A detective agency, then," Mr. Thurston proposed.

"With a signed agreement that if a word leaks out they receive no pay. That will do." And Edward hastened away to make the contract.

"The little devil!" He smiled as he reentered the carriage, where his sister awaited him. "Blanche, how much money did she have?"

"I don't know. Only what happened to be in her purse."

"How much; a hundred dollars, five hundred?"

"Bless you, no; I suppose not more than twenty; maybe not ten."

Edward turned on his sister sharply. "And you let that child go about with only—!" He checked himself. He knew he was ridiculous. "Poor little thing!" he added.

Every day the superintendent of the detective agency reported progress. They were following clues. It seemed as if half the young women of New York were in a conspiracy to dress as Barbara was dressed and to wear a hunted look. Some of them were shadowed to fashionable homes, some to places with red transoms, and only when they were run to cover did their resemblance to Barbara cease.

Edward Landor thought and thought and thought. That was his way of solving problems. "What is the use of searching a haystack for a needle when there is no reason to think there is any needle there?" He believed he should yet be able to think out the logical thing that Barbara would do. A week passed, and then a month, yet he had not thought it out. Every clue had failed. The detectives had lost their enthusiasm. Still, he rummaged in his brain for her hiding-place—in his brain for the material Barbara whose essence was so safely stowed in his breast.

Edward's one partially diverting experience was the receipt of a long, passionate letter from Paris. It said: "The new man is charming, crisper

than ever. I like new men. You are always new, you dear thing. No matter what instrument you play, you always make the sweetest of music. I have gone beyond analysis. I live only in the realm of feeling; realize only that you are the king and that the king can do no wrong. Be what you will, who you will, I am always and forever yours, yours, just yours."

When Edward read this letter to his brother-in-law Thurston was elated. "She thinks you wrote it," he said, proudly.

"She doesn't care who wrote it. You remember Lowell's answer to the Baconian: 'It was not Shakespeare who wrote the plays; it was another man of the same name.' What does it matter who writes letters, so they are up to our ideals? Write another, Herbert. At least it does you good, and satisfies her."

One afternoon, a month later, Mrs. Thurston was called to the telephone.

"Blanche—" it was Edward's voice—"come down with the brougham. I have found Barbara."

"Where? How?"

"One at a time, please. Where? At the very top and last rung of the literary ladder. How? In the most natural way in the world—the unexpected. Hurry down."

When the brougham reached the designated corner Edward was waiting for it. "She is working in that bookbindery," he said.

"Ned, you are a wonderful man. How on earth did you locate her?"

"I am, Blanche; I admit it. I am a positively marvelous detective. I was walking along the street thinking of something else—the first time in two months that I have thought of anything but Barbara—when I saw her come out of that little restaurant with a lot of girls and go into the bookbindery. Did ever the Russian secret service perform a greater feat than that?"

"And she is there now?"

"She is there now, putting the final touches on the literature of our time, and surer of her living, I dare say, than those who merely lay the rough

foundations." Edward, though pale from the anxieties of the last two months, was in his gayest mood.

"You must go after her, Blanche. If I went those gum-chewers might laugh at her."

Mrs. Thurston returned from the bookbindery with a sad face. "She is not there, Ned. You must have been mistaken."

"I am not mistaken. Did you go in?"

"I went to the superintendent's office. He said there was no such 'hand' there."

"You asked for Barbara Kent, of course?"

"Certainly."

"Blanche, you have not the detective instinct. I will go in myself. Sit there." He almost flung Mrs. Thurston into the carriage and dashed away.

"I want to see Miss Kent, my—my niece," he said to the superintendent. "She is in there, probably under some other name. Send her out quietly, will you?"

"How can I, if you don't know her name?"

"Damn it, man! Send out the prettiest girl in the place."

The superintendent grinned. "Oh, it's her, is it?" He disappeared. Edward waited in the dingy little office, a corner roughly boarded off from the large workroom. He kept out of range of the dirty little window in the partition.

A tall, yellow-haired girl with jelly cheeks and small, sharp eyes came out. "The supe says you want to see me."

"Hell!" Then Edward changed his mind. "Hold on! Yes; I want to see you. Where did you lunch?"

"At the joint over there."

"There was a little lady with you—big round eyes—brown, I guess, maybe black—pretty eyes—little thing—lots of brown hair—beautiful hair—"

"You mean Tom, don't you?"

"Tom What?"

"Tom Thumb—little midget—walks like a major-general, this way."

"That's it! That's the lady. Major-generals never walk that way, but no matter. Can you keep your mouth shut?"

"Why? What for?"

"For that." He stripped a ten-dollar bill from a roll.

The small eyes glistened. One of them closed. "Mum as a clam."

"Tell Tom Thumb a lady wishes to see her at the street entrance. Have her come right down. Mum, now!"

"You bet."

Edward hurried down stairs and sent Mrs. Thurston to wait at the entrance.

Instead of Barbara the yellow-haired girl came. Tom Thumb was not in the bindery. Nobody knew where she was.

Time for fearing the laughter of girls was past. Edward went up the stairs by leaps. The lumbering freight elevator came squeaking up with a load. Yes, the elevator man knew all about it. He at once became the centre of attention, much to his enjoyment. Ordinarily he was not so important. It pleased him to roll the morsel of eagerly awaited information under his tongue before he gave it out. She had gone down with him last trip. No; he could not say whether she went up or down the alley.

None of the girls knew where Tom Thumb lodged. "She's sort o' funny that way," said the yellow-headed mollusk; "she flocks mostly by herself."

In the brougham, rolling hopelessly homeward: "She must have seen me, after all," Edward said.

"More likely she saw me and did not see you." Mrs. Thurston's judgment in this matter might be expected to be better than her brother's. "If she knew you were looking for her she would make a way for you to find her. She thinks you don't care. That is why she will never come back where she is likely to meet you. Oh, if most men were not so dense! If they only knew their own minds at the proper time!"

Edward was scribbling on an old envelope. "There, Blanche," he said, "what do you say to putting that into every newspaper in town?" It was an advertisement for big type:

BARBARA:

I love you. Come back.

EDWARD.

Mrs. Thurston could not repress a smile. "But, bless you, Barbara never reads the newspapers."

"Everybody ought to read the newspapers." Edward had not looked at one since he lost interest in the talk of possible war with Germany. "I might have posters made of it, then, and paper the town with them," he suggested, wildly.

"And next morning find 'Barbara Soap' or 'Barbara Biscuits' advertised under your message."

"Confound the advertisers! There ought to be a law against advertising." Edward was not a jolly old lion just now. He was a bear with a thorn in his foot.

Two days later he was a cage of frolicking, gibbering monkeys. A message had come from the mountains: "Barbara is here." It was James Kent's one real service to his daughter, and he performed it in violation of a promise she had exacted from him.

THE ANTICIPATED CHAPTER

IN WHICH A MAN AND A WOMAN THROW
FAT IN THE FIRE AND FLEE FROM CON-
TEMPLATION OF THE CONSEQUENCES

IT was providential that a calm, patient man, and not Edward Landor, controlled the progress of the train that took Barbara Kent's admirer to the Adirondacks. The speed, therefore, seldom exceeded a mile a minute. Edward might have got off and pushed it faster than that snail-pace, but he was too busily engaged. There was a lot of walking up and down the car to do and a time-table

to consult every few minutes, not to mention the longer catechism that must be repeatedly gone over with the train hands, and a book that must be read in snatches upside down. He could hardly be expected to do everything. So the matter of making the wheels go round was left to the engineer, who, after several interminable ages, succeeded in slowing up before the station some two miles from the Thurston preserve.

The train did not have to stop. Edward was the only passenger to get off, and he had already hopped to the platform. It was flattery to call it a station—a bare shed where trains disdained to halt regularly. There was nobody there, and Edward had never visited the preserve. The wagon road one way led over a mountain, the other way through a valley. He could see that there were no considerable buildings in the valley, so he strode off toward the mountain top.

After a mile or more the road bent round a high, bald spot, the crown of the mountain; and as nature does not attempt to conceal *her* bald spots by brushing wisps of side-hair over them, this bare brow was a good place from which to view the surrounding country. Edward clambered up the side and stood upon the dome, looking off to the west. There were the stables of the preserve, he was sure, and there was the house wherein he should find and claim his own. He turned back toward the road and stopped abruptly.

"Barbara!"

She was crouched beside a rock that did not conceal her. Edward obeyed his first impulse and stepped toward her. She sprang to her feet.

"Don't run," he shouted. "You can't get away." A sense of power pleased the whole man. He could catch her in a dozen strides. He could hold her where he caught her, and even though she screamed no one could hear her voice. A delicious calm possessed him—the calm of perfect confidence in mastery of a situation.

"Barbara," he said, quietly, "come here."

She realized that she was driven to a corner. She must fight or perish. "I won't!" She struck the great mountain with her tiny foot as if to arouse it to her aid.

Edward smiled serenely. "Barbara, come here; I want to kiss you."

She caught her breath and turned to run.

"I told you not to do that." Edward did not move.

Barbara set her wee form defiantly and said: "I hate you!"

"I know it, but you can't half-hate me at that distance. Barbara, come here. I want to tell you how much I love you. Come and whisper to me that you will be my little wife." He held out his arms toward her.

Where was her old friend now—her powerful, jolly old friend? Was he deserting her, after all, and at this dreadful crisis, too? Yes; she felt the mountain slipping under her feet—rolling and tumbling and laughing away. She seemed to be falling, falling—she could not save herself—she did fall—fell into a pair of outstretched arms, strong, oh, very strong, stronger even than the old giant mountain. Her face was in her hands.

"Here," said Edward, "put your face in this." After a long pause she peeped fearfully between two trembling fingers. He was holding his hat before her. "And," he whispered, close to her burning ear, as if even the mountain must not share this confidence, "whenever you embrace my coat hereafter, please be sure that I am inside it."

In a week they were back in the city. At the club Edward found another letter from Paris. He took it, together with the rest of that correspondence, and went over it with Barbara, telling her the whole tale.

"Oh, you lovely man!" She flung her arms about his neck and bit his chin, leaving prints of perfect teeth upon it. "I could eat you."

"Don't do it, you little cannibal.

Wait until we have rounded up this business. You must help."

Barbara was all excited interest. "What am I to do?" She wished to run right away and do it before she knew what it was.

"Sit still, you witch, and listen." Edward gave her full instructions. "Do you understand?"

To be sure she understood. There had been a time when she hardly knew a word he said, but that was long, long ago—ages and ages ago, in some other world. Now she seemed to know everything he was going to say long before he said it. What a rare and blessed boon it was to her just to understand and be understood!

That evening Mr. and Mrs. Thurston, Mr. Landor and Mrs. Landor-elect were seated in the library. Edward nodded slyly at Barbara.

"Uncle Herbert," said she, "here is a letter for you."

"That reminds me," said Edward; "here is a letter for you, Blanche."

Mr. and Mrs. Thurston recognized the handwriting of each other. They smiled. Some joke, no doubt. Then they turned to the familiar words of endearment with which the letters began, and both lost color.

The silence was intense, painful.

"Well, the fat's in the fire, Barbara," said Edward, "and you and I can't fish it out." He took her by the hand and led her from the room.

The next morning, when Mr. and Mrs. Thurston came to breakfast they looked as sheepish as a pair of young lovers caught in a dark vestibule.

In his own good time Edward Landor told the rest of the story. As the result of a discussion with a Paris friend, in which Edward had maintained that wealth, position, personal appearance, and even personal acquaintance, are hindrances rather than helps to the successful wooing of woman's real heart the world over, he had advertised for a lady correspondent in each of four remote countries. It was not until some months later, when his chosen New York correspondent ceased the de-

ception of disguised handwriting, that he recognized her as his sister. It was then too late to remove the deep impression he had made on her heart, and his only means of bringing happiness to her was to raise her husband to the level to which his own simple-hearted wooing had lifted her. If, in the accomplishment of this end, he employed some Machiavellian means, what odds? Barbara approved. It was easy to have his Paris agent forward letters to and from him, so he had kept up the correspondence after his return to New York until he could safely turn it over to his brother-in-law.

Mr. and Mrs. Thurston never forgave each other's aberrations from the conventional path of prudence.

They agreed there was nothing to forgive. In their deviations both had come closer to the heart of things, and both were glad.

"Anyway," said pretty little Mrs. Landor, "Uncle Herbert is another man and Aunt Blanche is another woman. So there. They are not the same people at all."

"Which is a very wise remark," said her husband. "And now, Barbara, who is the very sweetest man in all the great, big world?"

"You're not."

"Yes I am. Come and kiss me."

"I won't."

"Then you sha'n't."

"Then I will."

Thus to this day Edward Landor tyrannizes over his slave.



A NOVEL ENDING

"**J**AGGERLY barely escaped a very serious accident last evening," remarked Gaggerly.

"Indeed," replied Waggerly; "how so?"

"Well, it seems that on entering his hallway when returning from the club he lost his equilibrium, and his head came into violent contact with the polished floor. Might have resulted fatally."

"In that event," rejoined Waggerly, without any apparent compunction, "it would have been a sort of hardwood finish, eh?"



TRUTH IN JEST

"**S**AY," he asked, entering the laundry hurriedly, "how long does it take you to do up a shirt?"

"Oh, about two or three washings," replied the girl behind the desk, flippantly.

DIANA TO ENDYMIION

E NDYMIION—Endymion!
Young shepherd with the eyes that are
Unkindled as the farthest star
Remote from ways I fleet upon!

Thy lips are scarlet flowers that yet
Close perfumeless, that never knew
Hot touch of sun or any dew
Beneath a dark earth's coverlet.

Thy life is as a thing asleep—
White, motionless, till for thy sake
The voice of Love shall cry “Awake!”
And all thy blood shall thrill and leap.

Have I not seen, low bent to see,
Night after night, from clinging skies,
The calm of thy unconscious eyes,
Thy young, exquisite purity?

I am a-hungered over-much
To rouse thee with a whispered name
And see thy being break on flame
Beneath Diana's smile and touch.

I have outgrown the god's embrace;
I, who am formed of snow and fire,
Have sickened of a god's desire
From too much thinking of thy face.

I am a-weary of old love,
Who have been granted clearer sight;
Mars may not charm me, nor the might
And passionate, strong arms of Jove.

Yea, thou shalt see a miracle!
For Love's sake shall a goddess be
Equaled to thy humility,
For thou art so desirable!

I shall descend to thy own place
While yet the deep of night is mine;
My hands shall find their way to thine,
My lips shall fall upon thy face.

THE SMART SET

And sudden shall new dreams outbreak—
 Full-grown, triumphant, glorious—
 And all my love shall circle us,
 And all thy tardy youth awake.

Lo, like a swift wind do I come—
 Flame-like I pierce and part the night!
 Oh, my belovèd—my delight—
 Endymion—Endymion!

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



SPOKE FROM CONVICTION

MRS. NAGGERLY—I've often noticed that sisters never have the same disposition.

MR. NAGGERLY—That's the strongest argument I've ever heard in favor of marrying a deceased wife's sister.



MAIDENLY GRIEF

SHE (*regretfully*)—You are the first man who has ever kissed me, and now you are going to leave me!

HE—Never mind, darling. Don't let your mind dwell on what you will miss.

SHE—I wasn't. I was thinking of all I had missed.



ORATORICAL ATHLETICS

REV. DR. PORTLY (*the Methodist minister*)—I am afraid I don't take enough exercise, doctor.

DOCTOR REAPER—I shouldn't be surprised. Why not make your sermons longer?



THE VIEWPOINT OF EXPERIENCE

NEWLYWED—Does your wife ever threaten to go home to her mother?

OLDBOY—Why, my boy, I wouldn't consider that a threat.

THE FIRST OCEAN YACHT RACE

By Stephen Fiske

NEW YORK had its smart set, in 1866, reinforced by the newly rich "shoddy aristocracy" of the Civil War, and with headquarters at Delmonico's, then on the corner of Fourteenth street and Fifth avenue. One night, after dinner, the interminable discussion of the comparative merits of centreboard and keel yachts was resumed by Mr. Pierre Lorillard, who owned the centreboard *Vesta*, and Mr. George Osgood, the owner of the keel yacht *Fleetwing*. Mr. Osgood derided the seaworthiness of any centreboard boat.

"I'll sail you to England!" exclaimed Mr. Lorillard.

"That suits me!" said Mr. Osgood.

"And in December, when we'll get the roughest weather!"

"The rougher the better!"

So the match was made for a nominal stake to cover expenses, and by the next afternoon every man with sporting blood had heard about it. Among these was Mr. James Gordon Bennett, the son of the founder of the *Herald*, who had just been admitted to the Union Club. A few months before he had incurred undeserved ridicule by taking a short cut through Plum Gut in one of the New York Yacht Club races. His sailing-master, not Mr. Bennett, was at fault; but the other papers were glad to satirize anybody connected with the *Herald*, and "Plum Gut Bennett" seemed likely to become his popular sobriquet. His keel schooner, *Henrietta*, was not fast, but she was stanch, and he thought that here was the opportunity to redeem his yachting reputation. When he asked to be permitted to make a third in the race,

Messrs. Lorillard and Osgood eagerly consented, on condition that the stakes be raised to \$30,000 each. Money was no object to Mr. Bennett, and the other contestants, knowing that he had the slowest boat, looked upon him as what was called, in the slang of those days, "chicken feed."

It was agreed that the race should be sailed from New York to Cowes, Isle of Wight; the start to be on Tuesday, December 11; the winner to take the whole purse; the New York Yacht Club to supervise the arrangements; the Club Commodore, McVickar, to sail the same day on the steamship *Scotia* and act as referee, and two members of the Club to go on each boat as judges. No sooner were these terms published than a newspaper campaign against "the *Herald* race" was organized. Led by the *Times*, then edited by Mr. Henry J. Raymond, with the brilliant Mr. W. H. Hurlbert as his lieutenant, the papers denounced the affair as a conspiracy to drown yachtsmen and sailors in order to advertise the *Herald*, and called upon the authorities to interfere. Attempting to cross the Atlantic in Midwinter was simply suicidal, according to the rival editors, and everybody concerned ought to be arrested and imprisoned.

Exaggerated as these attacks were, they had some effect. Messrs. Lorillard and Osgood were business men, and they pleaded important engagements as their reason for modifying the understanding that each contestant should sail on his own yacht. The night before the start the picked crew engaged for *Henrietta* were induced by their frightened sweethearts and

wives to desert in a body, and the boat had to be manned by recruits pressed from the sailor lodging-houses, and to sail shorthanded. But the members of the Yacht Club who had volunteered to serve as judges were undismayed, and two days before the race I succeeded in convincing Mr. Bennett that his duty to his country, the *Herald* and himself was to go on his yacht. Business men might prudently stay at home and attend to their business, but the memory of Plum Gut would be intensified by his refusal to risk his life on the Atlantic.

The start was from Sandy Hook, and the spectacle was beautiful. The afternoon was bright, cold and breezy; the sea and sky were a frosty, greenish blue. Excursion steamers, ferry boats, tugs, steam and sail yachts escorted us in procession down the Narrows. Flags fluttered from ship and shore. The forts on Governor's and Staten Islands fired salutes. Bands played, and there were hearty cheers for "the only man who goes in his own boat!"

At 1 p.m. Mr. Fearing, the official starter of the Yacht Club, gave his signal, and we were off for Merrie England. *Henrietta* had the worst of the start on account of her inefficient crew. "They slide up and down the rigging like a blasted monkey on a blasted stick!" growled Chief Officer Jones; "the only way to manage 'em is to climb up first and pull the lubbers after me!" But at last all sail was set, and *Henrietta* slowly followed her competitors over the line.

At first it was a pleasure trip, except that the weather was rather too cold for comfort. In two hours the Navesink Highlands falsified their name by sinking below the horizon. One tug had accompanied us thus far, and now steered about with faint farewell cheers and whistles. We were on the open sea. As the night shrouded the view *Fleetwing* glided out of sight, like a gray ghost. *Vesta* sailed parallel to us until 8 p.m.; then her lights seemed blown out as suddenly as if she had sunk. Neither of

these yachts was seen or heard of again until they arrived at Cowes.

Captain Samuels, already famous for his fast trips on the clipper ship *Dreadnaught*, was in command of *Henrietta*, and at dinner he communicated to us his plan of campaign. *Fleetwing* had evidently taken what is called the Northern passage, to get all the wind possible. *Vesta* had chosen the Southern passage, to avoid the Winter gales. *Henrietta* was confessedly the slowest boat, and the Captain had decided to put her on the steamer track, and keep her there, regardless of wind or weather, because it is the shortest route. He adhered to this plan so rigidly that at one time we lay to under storm try-sails for eighteen hours rather than leave our course. We struck the Scilly Islands as truly as if we had been fired from a huge cannon, and we had to wear ship in the dark to prevent running aground on the treacherous rocks.

Our party consisted of Messrs. Mervin and Knapp, the Yacht Club judges; "Larry" Jerome, the famous humorist of the Union Club, who, like Wegg, dropped into yacht racing as a friend; Captain Samuels, Mr. Bennett and myself. The table was covered with all the delicacies of the season, donated to us by friends. At the masthead swung a dozen brace of canvasback ducks, to be presented to the Queen if we succeeded in winging our way across the Atlantic. Our larder overflowed, and in "the roaring forties" we feasted upon oysters in every style as enjoyably as if we had been in a private room on shore.

Nevertheless, dining had its difficulties. The table, like the yacht, was tilted at an angle of forty-five degrees. It was as good as a game of baseball to see Jerome catch the soup tureen on the fly, amid cries of "Not out!" "Judgment!" or the rest of us make slides for the plates and glasses. Not a man missed a meal. During the pauses in the conversation and laughter the roar of wind and wave, the groaning of timbers and cordage could be heard, and as the water

swashed back and forth over the skylights we seemed like divers taking a rest in a submarine compartment.

For days the yacht was running between walls of water, as through a tunnel. Behind the moving walls, as they rose and fell, were lovely mirages of cities of white marble or windblown veils of rain and snow. The yacht was being driven at steamer speed by a succession of squalls and gales. Now and then a huge wave, like a white-crested monster of the deep, would crawl out of the darkness and fling itself upon the deck in a roaring rage. One wave, rearing its crest aloft, fell upon our lifeboat, like a furious beast upon its prey, and literally crushed the tiny victim into fragments. I picked up a handful and reported to Captain Samuels that our only boat was smashed and swept overboard.

"That's no loss," he replied, cheerily; "the boat couldn't live if this yacht couldn't float. Pipe all hands to supper, sir!"

Of course, we were supplied with playing cards and reading matter; but there seemed no spare time for games or literature. There were the chances of the race to be talked over; stories to be told; good old times to be revived; the log to be written up; and, when other occupations lacked interest, we could always try to straighten out Jerome's betting book, which he had filled so scientifically that, whatever yacht won the race, he would be a heavy loser. Poor "Larry" was the life of the party. His wit and humor were inexhaustible. At the slightest complaint his stentorian voice thundered, "If you don't like your quarters, take your carpetbag and go ashore!"

Captain Samuels jockeyed *Henrietta* as if she were a racing mare. He fairly weighed the wind, giving the yacht all of it she could bear, and relieving her by reefing the instant that she was overstrained. Sails were set from the size of a handkerchief to a flowing sheet if there was a lull in the squalls, and then taken in reluctantly if the gale increased. His was the eternal vigilance that proved to be the

price of victory. Except one night, when we compelled him to turn in for a sound sleep, we always found him on deck, watching the weather, the sails, the compass or the crew.

Before leaving New York none of us had cared much for *Henrietta*; but she was so stanch, she sailed so much faster than anyone had expected, she responded so nobly to the care lavished upon her, that all of us fell in love with her. When we patted her deck affectionately and called her "Good old girl!" she thrilled under the caress, and appeared to increase her speed. We wrote love songs to her, singing them to popular airs, like the Dewey campaign ballads, and months later all yachting England joined with us in the "Evelina" chorus:

Dear Henrietta! Swift Henrietta!
Our love for thee shall never, never fail!

It was a lonely ocean. Although on the ocean track, we sighted no steamers. The few sailing ships that we encountered kept off of our course, perhaps mistaking us for a mythical Fenian privateer that was then supposed to be attacking British commerce, the dark-blue racing flag of *Henrietta* looking black in the leaden light. Off the Banks of Newfoundland we raced by a clumsy brig in the fog so quickly that we could not make out her name as we passed under her stern. Her crew manned the rigging, but were too much astonished to answer our hail. They had not heard of the yacht race; they had never before seen so small a boat defying the Atlantic in such weather; in every bulging eye could be read the question, "Is she the Fenian privateer or the *Flying Dutchman*?" If there was any betting on board the brig the odds must have been in favor of the latter.

On the first Sunday out we held divine service. Captain Samuels was one of the wardens of St. Ann's Church, New York, and essayed to read the Lessons of the Day and one of Jay's sermons. I doubt whether any of the rest of us had been to church since we were christened; but

being at sea on a yacht in a storm is conducive to serious reflections regarding time and eternity, and we responded piously during the lesson. Just as the sermon began a nervous and imaginative carpenter reported that *Fleetwing* was in sight. The service ended without a doxology; everybody rushed on deck, only to discover that the supposed *Fleetwing* was a snow squall, and Jay's eloquence in one ponderous volume was hurled at the carpenter's head.

But the weather grew worse and rougher. Hitherto the snow had smoothed the sea, like oil; now the water was angrily choppy, and the yacht pitched and tossed as if she had gone mad with excitement. Out of the wild ocean, like a threatening finger, rose the mast of some sunken ship, as if to warn us of our fate. "Larry" Jerome had promised his wife to read the Bible in times of danger and distress, and in a quavering, lugubrious voice he commenced to recite the first chapter of Matthew: "Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren." We could not help laughing at his characteristically inappropriate selection, but the laughter was somewhat forced.

Then in dashed the unfortunate carpenter, as pale as a ghost, and shaking with fear. We stared at him, and it seemed hours before he could recover himself sufficiently to whisper, hoarsely:

"She's opening for'ard, sir! The sea is a-pouring in! We'll all go down by the head, sir!"

It was another false alarm. Pushed into the forecastle, and ordered to point out the leak, the trembling carpenter was forced to acknowledge that the water "a-pouring in" came from the Lethe that surrounds Dreamland. But *Henrietta* had been lengthened forward, and the overlapped timbers were writhing and scrunching terribly. Captain Samuels made an anxious examination; his face and voice were solemn, and he took off his cap, as in the presence of death.

"We must heave to, Mr. Bennett,"

he said; "she can stand the strain no longer." Then he added, and ordered it to be entered on the log: "I have been over thirty years afloat, and never saw a ship that could have carried on so long as this little plaything has."

But that was cold comfort. Heave to during a race! The simile of a death seemed not too exaggerated. It was emphasized when the sailors lifted out the storm trysails that were stored under the cabin floor and carried them slowly up the companion-way, as the bearers carry a corpse. Heave to, in the slowest boat, with only half of the course covered! The wind whistled at us mockingly. The waves danced about us, rejoicing at our failure and their victory. The storm trysails once rigged, *Henrietta* rocked as comfortably as a cradle. But could we win the race in a cradle? For eighteen hours we endured this aquatic purgatory; then we resumed the race determinedly, like good Americans, but we had lost all hope of winning.

As in the middle of a desert there is an oasis, so in the middle of the Atlantic we presently came upon a calm. In one night we passed from Winter cold to Summer warmth. There had been no sunshine; but now the sun shone brightly. The yacht, that had been lashed to such speed by whips of hail and sleet, rolled lazily, like a tame seal, upon the placid water. No one could realize that such a July day was December 21.

Captain Samuels was a church warden, but he was also a sailor, and, instead of reading more prayers, he followed the sailor superstition and ordered all hands to change their clothing and whistle for wind. Had not the stake been so weighty, in honor as well as money, the sight of the yachtsmen, attired in clean togs and unsuspected finery, every man puckering his mouth for a whistle, would have been more comical than an amateur minstrel show.

The Captain whistled as fervently as he had prayed, and great Boreas

answered him promptly. The wind came—at first in fickle flaws, then in a bouncing breeze, then in the great gusts that had blown us so fast and far. As if refreshed by her long rest, *Henrietta* fairly flew through the rapidly rising waves. As we flashed over a school of porpoises, the carpenter—perhaps hoping to redeem himself—reported that one of the pupils had been cut in two by the stem of *Henrietta* as if by a sharp knife. The log book, which is more authentic, notes that we made in twenty-four hours the longest run of the voyage, and the longest run ever made by a yacht in one day.

Hurried along by friendly storms, *Henrietta* lost herself for several hours in a Scotch mist, and when we emerged the dull gray sky of England was above us, and the Star Spangled Banner blazed into view, like an emblem of hope, courage and success. Never did heartier cheering greet the Flag. It waved over the good old packet ship *Philadelphia*, several days out from Liverpool, and the genial Captain nearly tumbled over the taffrail in his haste to assure us that no yacht had as yet passed up the English Channel. Hurrah! But the news seemed too good to be true. Hurrah! But we dared not discuss it with each other. Hurrah! This was on Christmas Eve, and here's to the health of the losers and the loved ones at home!

The sleepless night seemed endless in our excitement, and it was a relief to be obliged to work hard in wearing ship to clear the Scillies. The next morning we were in the Channel. Pilot boat, ahoy! A Cowes pilot was dragged on board so quickly that he could not speak. But his eyes and the grip of his hand spoke for him. At last he put his good news into words:

“No other boat ahead of you! What yacht is this?”

You might have heard on both sides of the Atlantic the unanimous shout: “The *Henrietta*! God bless her!”

Then everybody cheered, and embraced, and assured everybody else

that he had always said that *Henrietta* would win. Why, there never was the slightest doubt about it! The slowest boat? No, sir; the fastest boat that ever floated. Had to lay to eighteen hours? Why, she could lay to for a week, and then win easily! Then more cheering. Meanwhile, Captain Samuels bedecked the yacht with all her sails and flags, and, as if appreciating the compliment, *Henrietta* sailed faster and faster up the Channel and suddenly turned to pass the Needles, the winning post. Then, coquettishly promenading, like a belle after a waltz, she slackened speed as the rocks shielded her from the wind and sauntered leisurely into Cowes harbor, as though she had been out for a brief pleasure trip instead of a racking race across the Atlantic in December.

As soon as our colors were made out, salutes were fired from H. M. S. *Hector*, an ironclad, and from the Royal Yacht Squadron's battery. A few moments after a midshipman from the *Hector* came on board to offer *Henrietta* the hospitalities of the dockyard at Portsmouth. That midshipman is a Post-Captain now, but he does not forget his first experience of “Yankee hospitality,” and retells the story over the walnuts and the wine. It was, indeed, a proud moment when Mr. Bennett told him that not a sail or spar was injured; that no repairs of any kind were needed, and that, in as fine trim as she left New York, *Henrietta* would have the honor of being paraded for the inspection of the Queen, who had seen, years before, “*America* first; the others, nowhere.”

We had won; but what had become of our competitors? They answered for themselves by slipping into Cowes harbor a few hours later. The *Fleet-wing* had lost six of her crew of whaling captains. They were swept out of the cockpit by a huge wave while smoking their pipes after dinner and eulogizing the advantages of the Northern passage, and only the cool courage and presence of mind of Mr. Ernest Staples, one of the Yacht

Club judges, had saved the boat. The *Vesta* was all right, but had sailed too far up the Channel before taking a pilot, and so had to retrace her course.

It was Christmas Day, and you can imagine the talk of the yachtsmen over the Christmas dinner. Captain Brown, of the *Fleetwing*, explained that if he had not gone so far north and lost so many men he would have won the race. The *Vesta* Captain made it equally clear that if he had not gone so far south and then missed his way in the Channel he could not have lost. We modestly agreed with them, although now and then a wink or a chuckle was irrepressible. No matter; we were all together again, and victors and vanquished could take part in the inevitable festivities.

These began an hour after our arrival, when White, a famous yacht builder, had us rowed to his residence and showed us his models, while the ladies of his family gathered roses for us in the garden in the Christmas sunshine. The Queen sent a couple of lords-in-waiting with the royal congratulations and an invitation to Osborne House. The Royal Yacht Squadron tendered us a banquet at Cowes, as did the Royal Albert Yacht Club at London. England loves sailors, and we were the heroes of a minute. To cap the climax, the amusement manager of the Crystal Palace proposed to exhibit us and *Henrietta* as a side show, and inquired our lowest terms.

Poor "Larry" Jerome was our mainstay at the banquets. The Britishers took all his comicalities quite seriously. He used to say that England was the hardest place in the world in which to get off a joke; but he persevered, like a brave pioneer, and thus cleared the way for the successes of Senator Depew, Mark Twain and Ambassador Choate. When he described our voyage as a pleasant sail over sunny seas, and predicted that steamships would be abolished, and all good Americans buy yachts and land at Cowes, his auditors shook

their heads and pronounced the prospect impracticable from a business point of view. When he excused me by stating that I had been so busy with writing the speeches for the rest of the party that I had no time to prepare one for myself, they looked at him reproachfully, evidently considering it unfair to reveal the author of all the eloquence. He puzzled them awfully; but they may now have the satisfaction of knowing that they equally puzzled him.

One thing in especial "Larry" could never understand—the English etiquette by which Commodore McVickar became the official representative of our party. The Commodore had not come across on a yacht. He was the referee of the race; but we had beaten him on the slow *Scotia* by over a day, so that there was nothing to referee by the time he arrived. Yet all our invitations came to and through Commodore McVickar. The Commodore and his friends—not Mr. Bennett and his friends, the winners of the yacht race—were invited to visit the House of Commons and hear Disraeli and Gladstone, John Bright and "Bob" Lowe; to inspect Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace and the Queen's stables. "Larry," who played well the rôle of "honest *Jago*," never ceased to magnify this imaginary wrong. As shrewd as he was mischievous, he succeeded in preventing the appearance of Mr. Bennett at the Queen's reception and other functions, and he divided the American yachtsmen into McVickar and Bennett factions.

To equalize matters, and prove indubitably who was the hero of the yacht race, I urged Mr. Bennett to present *Henrietta* to the Duke of Edinburgh, then "the Sailor Prince of England." I knew that the Duke could not accept such a royal gift, because he was not rich enough to give in return something equally valuable; but I wished to discomfit the McVickarites by a startling sensation. "Larry" was not let into this affair; I consulted solely with Captain Samuels. Fortunately, Mr. Bennett cared nothing for Court etiquette or a return pres-

ent, and was willing to give away the yacht as openhandedly as he had gone into the race.

Mr. Bennett's letter to the Duke was referred to the Admiralty, and Lord Henry Lennox, then one of the Secretaries, telegraphed me to come to London for the reply. He had the look and manner of a trained diplomatist, and I saw at once that it would be useless to beat about the bush. So, when he asked me frankly if I knew that there was not the slightest possibility that His Royal Highness would be allowed to accept the yacht, I replied as frankly. We had a laugh together over "the Yankee notion," and a formal but grateful declination by the Duke was forwarded the next day. Then the correspondence was published all over the world.

On his return to New York, after a grand banquet by the yachtsmen of Paris and special courtesies from the Emperor Napoleon—who was most delighted with a case of American whisky sent to him by some New York friends—Mr. Bennett was elected Commodore of the Yacht Club. Captain Samuels, still well and vigorous, is one of the proprietors of the *Marine Journal* and the author of a bright book, "From Forecastle to Cabin."

Mr. Jones, our sailing master, has been in charge of the *Herald* news-boat, off Sandy Hook. Our boatswain is custodian of one of the late Judge Bedford's buildings on Cortlandt street. I have met and compared notes with Mr. Ernest Staples at the Manhattan Club. "Larry" and others of our party have long since gone aloft.

Olsen, the veteran steward of the New York Yacht Club, tells me that *Fleetwing* is sailing as fleetly as ever. *Vesta*, now owned by Major J. Fred Ackerman, has been thoroughly overhauled, equipped with wire rigging, and new sails, and put in commission for this Summer's cruises. But "dear *Henrietta*," I regret to say, was sold by Mr. Bennett, who desired a larger boat, *Dauntless*, which did not repeat the old yacht's victory in a second ocean race. Taken South for the orange trade, *Henrietta* was wrecked and sunk off the Florida coast. I suggest that her memory should be honored by a *Henrietta* Cup for transatlantic racers, and if there be in the present generation of yachtsmen the pluck and enterprise of their forbears, this would soon rank with the *America's* Cup in popular estimation.



AN AVERAGE GIRL

She has views of Venice and Rome,
Of the Thames, the Seine and the Rhone;
She has traveled afar from her home,
But she has no views of her own!

NATHAN M. LEVY.



AT THE HUNT DINNER

MR. HARDRYDER—Some apollinaris with your tipple, Miss Highflyer?
MISS HIGHFLYER—No, thanks, I'll go straight at it and take the water jump.

ASSOCIATION

I KNOW a maid who says me nay,
 But whose warm wizardries of lure,
 Whate'er the distance I shall stray,
 With dear companionships endure.

For when the lily of dawn breaks pure,
 Its peace and sanctity impart
 In chaste, auroral portraiture
 The semblance of her virgin heart.

Or yet, while pulses glow and start,
 Her voice my answering spirit thrills,
 When deep through lyres of leafage dart
 The zephyr's long, euphonious trills.

Or in some damask rose that spills
 Rare balms and dews her lips I trace;
 Her laugh the allegros of the rills
 Repeat; the willow applauds her grace.

And when the darkening doors of space
 Benignant night's bold hand unbars,
 The silvery symbols of her face
 Throng earthward from a thousand stars.

EDGAR FAWCETT.



WHY THEY SEPARATED

MRS. TWITTERLY (*for the eighth time*)—Now, really, John, what kind of dress do you think would become me this Summer?

MR. TWITTERLY (*wearied*)—For heaven's sake, Mary, what you need is muzzlin'!



CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

BRIGHTON—Do you know who gave me these cigars?

VAN SNAP—No, but I can guess why.

THE FIERCE WHITE LIGHT

By Celia Myrover Robinson

“BUT, my dear, you must admit that it is amusing, if viewed from the proper standpoint,” said the Duke.

“Amusing!” said the Duchess. “It is horrible! I feel like a penny sideshow at a circus. Amusing, indeed! It is positively revolting!”

“You are charming, my darling, and all that,” said the Duke, smiling lazily through half-closed eyes at the beautiful, perturbed face of Her Grace. “You are everything that you should be, as a representative of your countrywomen, save one—your sense of humor is not sufficiently developed. Now—”

“Oh, bother!” said the Duchess.

“Now, for example,” continued the Duke, argumentatively, in no wise disconcerted, “if you were in possession of that attribute you would see much to amuse you in what now is, to you, so obnoxious. To me, I must confess, the thing is diverting.”

“Diverting to see one’s name in great, glaring headlines every time one picks up a paper?” exclaimed the Duchess; “to have one’s self described in the *Tattler* as a ‘red-headed siren, with a svelte, graceful figure;’ in the *Yellow Screamer* as ‘a petite, dainty edition of femininity, with raven hair and soulful, black eyes,’ while the pages of the *Rager* describe me as looking ‘more like a small, fat, fair-haired German fraulein than anything else!’ It makes me feel chameleon-like, to say the least; and to have one’s likes and dislikes, merits and demerits, discussed in public print—why—”

The Duke laughed uproariously.

“Oh,” cried the Duchess, “you are

so provoking, Roderick! I don’t believe you even care.”

“Care?” said the Duke. “It is delightful! I was a nonentity for so long, and now suddenly to awake and find myself a celebrity! To achieve distinction and win fame one must marry an American beauty!”

He went around to the back of her chair and, taking her lovely, flushed face between his two big palms, kissed, again and again, the pouting lips.

“Do you really care so much?” he said, trying to throw the sympathetic quality into his voice, despite his amusement.

“Of course I care. I almost—yes, I really do—I almost wish I had never married you,” cruelly.

“Your candor is delightful,” replied His Grace.

“Oh, Rod, you are too good-natured!” cried the Duchess, contritely, rumpling up his long hair, which was worn like a football player’s. “Why don’t you scold me when I am so cross?”

“What was it the *Gabbler* said this morning?” queried the Duke, ruminating. “It is rumored that the Duke of Athlone is in no wise the amiable personage he looks, but it is whispered—”

“Oh, don’t!” exclaimed the Duchess. “You’re worse than Billy. Listen—this is his latest:

“MY DEAREST SISTER:

“I regret to see that you have taken to dyeing your hair. I have seen, from several dozen perfectly reliable sources, that you are a blonde with ‘fair hair,’ ‘yellow hair,’ ‘Titian hair,’ hair like ‘spun gold,’ like ‘ripe wheat,’ and likewise

that you have 'carrot locks.' Also that you are a brunette with 'gypsy coloring and brown hair,' 'dark-brown hair, 'golden brown,' 'bronze,' and 'black hair.'

"My dear Dorothy, surely it is not necessary to make such a guy of yourself, even if you are in England. No longer in Rome do we follow the example of the Romans, but, instead, we Americans always set the pace.

"Remember this, and, I beseech you, if you *must* dye your hair, do it artistically and all the same shade.

"There is more of it, and it is all equally brilliant; but I will just read you his postscript:

"P. S.—By the way, I send you by same steamer a few papers containing pictures of you and sketches of your life. How did you happen to be born in so many different places?

"Fondly,
"BILLY."

"Billy is a brute!" said the Duke, shaking with suppressed laughter.

"He is an imbecile."

"Let's see the papers. I had no idea they were so awfully interesting."

"Oh, there's just as much about you. You are described as the most amiable of men and possessed of fabulous wealth in the columns of one, and on the pages of its rival you are an impecunious nobleman, with the temper of a fiend. 'His Satanic Majesty,' it is headed. You have married me for my money, and, from what the papers say, it is a sort of international alliance for the benefit of the nations. Our honeymoon hasn't been a honeymoon at all—they have spoiled it."

"It's too bad," said the Duke. If his eyes were twinkling his mouth was grave. "What shall we do?"

"Let's," said the Duchess, "let's vamoose."

"Vam-what?"

"Vamoose—run away, you know. Let's," leaning across the table, smiling, excited, "let's run away from them and hide in some out-of-the-way place—travel incognito, you know, and all that. It would be so romantic!"

"Ye-es, very," replied the Duke of Athlone, dubiously.

Dorothea, Duchess of Athlone, to Miss Constance Trevor, Trevor Place, Virginia:

MY DEAR CONSTANCE:

I should not have been so long writing to you, but so much has happened that I have not known where to begin, so have begun nowhere.

But now, my dear, that it is over I will write you all about it, though I warn you it is a three-volume novel.

In the first place, you remember I wrote you what an awful time I was putting in, with Billy sending me letters and papers by every steamer that were enough to turn me gray, and the lack of sympathy from Roderick.

Then came the long silence for which you reproached me. That silence is what I have to tell you about.

When things became unbearable you must know that Roderick and I decided to run away; that is to say, I decided and he acquiesced.

It was quite exciting—the planning, I mean—and, later, the fulfilment.

At last Roderick became interested, in spite of himself, though at first he said it was a horrid bore going off to nowhere, just in the midst of the season. But the end of it was that we gave them all the slip—Billy, society, newspapers, *et al.*, and, traveling incognito, went to a dear, quiet little villa in the South of France, to hide away from the prying eyes of a too, too curious public and to enjoy our honeymoon in peace.

Such a charming little nest as it was—that villa! Running riot with roses and such balmy air and golden sunshine, and blue, blue skies! And how happy we were! We had only two servants—a chef and a gardener—and then, of course, there was a housekeeper. She was an American—so ugly—and so capable. Roderick's agent had procured her for us, and it seemed so providential. She seemed just the woman for the place—quiet as a mouse in her little gray gown, and never in the way; scarcely ever visible and yet things went like clockwork in that little house. As we say at home, she was "smart."

It was an ideal life. We lived over the old courtship days—only it was more delightful even, for there were only just us two in our paradise. We hadn't discovered our serpent then!

This beautiful state of things lasted a fortnight—*then the heavens fell!* Of course, our bankers knew where we were and our mail was sent to them and on to us.

When the first instalment of letters and papers from America came, there.

my dear, in those *beastly* sheets, days old, were set down in order our flight from the palace, our arrival in France, and so on, from day to day, all our doings being chronicled. And the incomprehensible part of it was that it was all correct! Our tastes in dress, our cuisine, our amusements, even our conversations, were duly served up for breakfast, day after day, to a voracious American public, while we innocently babbled and cooed, deeming ourselves safe from all prying gazers!

The *dénouement*? Well, I don't suppose we should ever have fathomed the mystery had it not been for those old days in the schoolroom at Trevor Place, when you, Billy and I studied "Pitman's Guide to Stenography." Thereby hangs a tale.

One morning, when we had discussed and rediscussed the strange proceedings, the plot was divulged, or at least a clue was obtained, in the simplest manner imaginable.

I found a slip of paper as we came up from the lake. It was on the veranda steps, and it was scribbled over with shorthand—Pitman system.

Roderick couldn't make it out, of course, and neither could I, for that mat-

ter, except for an occasional word or phrase here and there, but my name and his had caught my eye, and I felt justified in unraveling the enigma, if possible. By dint of much persevering study I did manage to decipher here and there a few words, now and then a sentence, and after hours of study made out that it was destined for the pages of the *Tattler*. It was a small clue, but we worked on it silently, arduously, for days, and were rewarded at last by the discovery of the perpetrator.

And whom do you suppose it was? None other than our quiet, gray-gowned little housekeeper, who proved to be an enterprising newspaper reporter in disguise! As Billy used to say, "Defend us from your new women every time."

Tell Billy that when he next hears of me, if I am correctly reported, my hair will be described as "a silvery white." I am growing old and gray.

Roderick and I are leaving on the next steamer. We are going to America, and we want you to hide us away in the wilds of Virginia. Good-bye.

Yours faithfully,

DOROTHEA,
Duchess of Athlone.



A TRYST

THE stars looked down on the sleeping waves,
And the soft South wind blew free;
The road wound white through the quiet hills,
Where the dead man walked with me.

His dead voice still in my ears rang sweet,
And I saw his dead eyes smile;
So smiled they once on a morn in May,
When the world was young for a while.

Oh, dead man, out of the buried past,
What are you seeking here?
Go back to the woman you loved at the last,
'Tis long since you held me dear.

I fain would walk where the living go,
And join in the dance and play;
Must I keep tryst with the faithless dead
For the sake of a morn in May?

But I heard the sigh of the soft, soft wind,
The moan of the murmuring sea;
And close at my side were those smiling eyes,
As the dead man walked with me.

PHŒBE LYDE.

A NEW MEMORY SYSTEM

MY friend, Micah Miggles, has a system of mnemonics all his own. When he wishes to remember one word he thinks of another that may sound quite different, but that bears some relation of ideas to the word he seeks to retain. Thus, if you told him to buy a pair of socks he would immediately think of the word "sockdolager," and, ten to one, when he arrived at the store the word would have turned into doxology, and he would come back with a hymn-book. So his system has its faults, but Miggles swears by it, and once in a while he evolves a triumph in his line.

Last week his wife asked him to stop at Munnimaker's and buy a few things for her. He immediately made a list so that he should not forget. I was with him when he drew out this list at Munnimaker's.

"Hello!" said he, "what's all this royal family about? I can't think whether it was books or kitchen utensils that Mrs. Miggles asked me to get." This after reading his list.

"What's on the list?" I asked.

"Why, I made it out in my system, you know, and I can't think of the key to it. I've got to have a starter always. It says 'King Henry V., one Prince of Wales, one Duke of York, Queen Victoria and Marquis of Lorne, too.'

"Why, it's historical works or photographs," said I, but I was really quite in the dark.

"No," said Miggles. "Just help me to think. I'm sure it wasn't books or pictures. I think it was dry goods."

Quite accidentally I put him on the track. If I hadn't, in spite of his system he would have gone home without a bundle, and as he is a commuter, that would have been a little irregular.

"What is King?" said I, half to myself.

"Ha!" said Miggles; "thanks. Cotton is king—old expression. Cotton—'King Henry V' equals five yards of cotton."

"Good!" said I. "But what in thunder is 'one Prince of Wales?'"

"Prince—prince—prints—one yard of prints!" And Miggles laughed with joy.

"There is more in that system than I thought," said I. "But what can you make out of 'one Duke of York?'"

"Duke—duke—duke. Duke—duchess. Ha! one yard duchesse lace."

"You're a wonder!" said I. "But what can 'Queen Victoria and Marquis of Lorne, too,' mean?"

Like a shot he answered: "Two yards of Victoria—lawn! Hooray!"

CHARLES BATELL LOOMIS.



SCORING ONE

QUERICUS—You say you gave your wife that \$200 you won on the bowling match? What for?

NONCHALANT—Pin money.

THE VOICE WITHIN

By Julien Gordon

(Mrs. Van Rensselaer Cruger)

HE was in one of those soft moods when feminine challenge finds ready response. There are men who believe such disposition a matter of sentiment. He did not. He was too clever. Not that he was at all an old person or a wise one—are the old wise?—but simply that he had keen perceptions, never more penetrating than when directed upon himself. This was natural; he found himself interesting.

He was moderately young—about twenty-nine—well made, handsome, healthy, a gentleman. His social position was whatever he chose to make it. He did not always choose to make it conspicuous, because he was studious and ungregarious, besides having a secret side to him which liked secret measures. Now and again the world of fashion with its calcium light exposures bored him, and he would drop it for a season.

He perfectly realized that the young woman who sat just across the aisle from him in the train was purely a reaction from an unusually ascetic twelve months. This did not make her any the less piquante. He was not *jeune premier* enough to “make eyes” at her. Nevertheless, by those subtle arts that experienced men know how to employ he did manage to convey to her the idea that her vicinity was agitating. The lady was apparently accustomed to such assurance. She accepted it with easy aplomb. In this case, however, there was an added note of triumph.

Laurence Preston was certainly good-looking. He was different from many, nay, perhaps from all the men who had thus far admired her. Of

this she became entirely conscious ten minutes after she settled herself in her seat. A large woman with numerous parcels occupied the half of it, and so Mrs. Quentell was crowded against the edge. Her draperies almost brushed Laurence's long legs, stretched across the passage. He was himself somewhat inconvenienced by a commercial traveler with a heavy valise.

She was a pretty woman with small, refined features and a pair of pensive little red-brown eyes. Her hair, of a vivid auburn, was shadowed by an immense hat covered with plumes. Somehow it was, although a fine hat in its way, not the sort of headgear that the woman of his world would have selected for traveling. He felt this vaguely; a woman would have known it definitely.

After a languishing *andante* for overture their mutual discomforts brought the *scherzo* of wholesome gaiety. Their eyes smiled across the car and the lady laughed. Her laugh was at once harmonious and sensual.

About them were the usual array of voyagers; men with the used, crushed faces of apathy and discouragement; men with the acrid countenance of disappointed hopes; men with the self-satisfied floridity of success and satisfied greeds, those cheerful beings who know little and possess much. Behind Mrs. Quentell sat a youth artificially *chic*, with a precocious corruption about him, an air of a dissipated doll. He was showily dressed and had dirty finger-nails. Before her sat a slick Jew, slender, vulgar and graceful, with splendid eyes. Mrs. Quentell

had instincts rather than opinions. She contrasted Laurence with these others, greatly to his advantage. She also reflected that at this moment, at least, she could have no rivals. There were few women in the car, and they were quite without sex and color.

She pretended to read a magazine, but only fluttered its leaves, examining the illustrations. They were the usual treatment of the text. Artists never display their stupidity more flagrantly than in illustration. An artist who reads the tale he illumines is a bird as rare as the jabiru. The author had explained that his heroine was tall and thin, in a Greek peplum, with braided hair. The illustrator had promptly depicted her squat and broad, in flounced petticoat and a sailor hat. But Mrs. Quentell cared more for the pictures than for the writing. She was not a careful reader, and perhaps hardly noted these discrepancies. This indifference of the public must be the author's consolation. Let him take it to his soul as he does other facts he learns to assimilate; for instance, that those who think him talented will never say it, and that those who say it don't think it.

All these things interested Mrs. Quentell very little. In the facile integrity of her past there had been no room for philosophic reflection. Her thought was a curious mixture of the practical and the romantic. Her husband, who was not romantic, had needed philosophy, and had acquired it. He believed that to appear to notice that we are deceived is to be deceived twice. Resolutely he closed his eyes to much; perhaps, after all, there was nothing grave to shut out. If his wife did not exactly suit him, he was fond of her. He looked upon her as a child. Yet she was twenty-eight years old. Mrs. Quentell knew that publicity and money are the modern gods. They had already begun to be so then, which was fifteen years ago. She did not know how to be poor, and she was greatly oppressed by expenses and bothered about bills. She was also distressed at her husband's continued

ill-health, which played the mischief with his bread-winning, and which she pitied, because her heart was gentle and kind.

She wished she was better known, more in evidence. Her life in the Hudson River town where she dwelt was dull and narrow, and she was trying to induce her lord to take lodgings in the city for the Winter. This scheme—which she was journeying down to look into—filled her horizon. She had lived ten years of her married life in what she called “the country,” in a pretty house on a quiet street. She was not *blasé* and not calculating. Her reveries were desultory, culminating in that longing for pleasure that was innate in her.

Preston had one of those personalities that please women and exasperate men. He had the virility of aspect and dominance of manner that excite “envy’s voice at virtue’s pitch” in weaker males. When he looked at a woman he—looked at her. How rare the eyes that really see! How subtle their spell! In his glance there was singular energy; nothing indefinite, floating. It seized its object like a prey. Sometimes it terrified, but more frequently caressed. If Dolly Quentell loved pleasure, Preston, who studied her pretty closely during the two hours that they sat side by side, decided he would give her the opportunity to fully gratify the propensity.

It is quite needless to enter into detail as to his methods of attack. It is safe to say that they were the usual ones. Men in such matters have lamentably little originality, but follow the beaten tracks of flattery, roses and sweetmeats, of stolen walks and still more stealthy drives, with an occasional breakfast *à deux* in a restaurant and the curtained *tête-à-tête* of a hidden *loge*. There were the usual repulses and yieldings, partings and recalls; there was the effort at “platonic,” but this came a trifle too late. It came in the way men accord them to women, who understand them differently. A woman’s platonic mean love words, nearness and kissed fingers. A man’s distance, with a

cigar and the discussion of tiresome topics.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Quentell did not want to discuss tiresome topics. She wanted to be in his arms. Naturally, the pretty dream fell. He intended that it should. She gave him exactly what he craved. Mrs. Quentell belonged to that type of womanhood her brighter and more high-spirited sisters call "a door-mat." Such women are more quickly corrupted than creatures of stronger fibre, yet probably their perversion is less absolute. They retain a certain ingenuousness in their misdoing, and sometimes a child's artlessness walks hand in hand with the subtleties and tortuosities of their sin. Not nervous, never morbid, Mrs. Quentell was eminently peace-giving. If she wept, it was usually in private. To her lover she brought only the lighter side of character. She knew it is the only one some men tolerate. Violent acts are always results. It pleases men—trite in their judgment of women—to believe that, having roused a woman's passion, she cannot wander; that this is a seal on her fidelity. This flatters a man's vanity and is charming, but, unfortunately, it is not true. It is sometimes the allurement she has resisted which prepares her for that to which she succumbs. It may be possible that if Mrs. Quentell was at her first fault, she was not quite at her first temptation. But, of course, this Preston did not believe or care about. He was even very maladroit sometimes in saying so. He could not imagine she had ever seen any man but himself. She bore meekly what would have incensed another woman, and rewarded his entire absence of jealousy with a corresponding insouciance. If it was not this, it was, at any rate, an excellent counterfeit. There were no "scenes." Scenes would undoubtedly have driven him away. He sometimes wondered if she believed him faithful; marveled, too, at the patience with which she bore his excursions into another world, a world which lay close, yet just out of her reach, and in which she suspected,

nay, knew, were lovely women and exclusive girls with haughty manners, perfect clothes and exquisite houses. She feared the girls more than the women. With girls there was always the appalling dread, the possible frightful tie which should take him from her definitely and forever.

Let us say at once, to her credit, that her flimsy coquetry had shriveled in an hour; that the poor thing, in her own foolish way, loved him to madness. In her abandon there had been no wariness, no caution. She had fluttered, of course, like a silly butterfly, and then the gold dust had stayed on his hand. Now she was his slave. Her empty past seemed trivial to her, its frivolities and follies vain and idle; for while she belonged to a class of women who invariably give food for gossip to their small *entourage*, she had, as I have said, on the whole, walked blameless.

Yes, she loved him. He did not love her in the least. Of course, he had lied his lies; he had gone through the usual comedy; he had gained his ends. At first she was so gentle and devoted he was really happy with her. She was never in the least exacting, and that is always a hold, such as it is. It is a question if a man who is not loyally faithful can be said to be "held" at all, while his happiness must remain apocryphal. Nevertheless, what doesn't convince women of intellect serves as a sop to women who are only sensuous and emotional.

After six years the "affair" began to pall on him. Good-natured, easy-going, cheerful and humane, he found himself growing, to his surprise, irritable, morose, even brutal. Once or twice he had turned upon her with a ferocity entirely foreign to his nature. His friends, from whom he had carefully concealed the intrigue, thought him the soul of amiability. On one occasion he and Mrs. Quentell had met under an arbor to breakfast together in a suburban tryst known to them as "safe." They really had not much to fear. Mrs. Quentell's husband was hopelessly

invalided and rarely left his room. She made the most of their slender income, never complained, and cared for him with exemplary patience. These brief escapes from the stuffy sick-room were her only recreation. She rocked herself in the belief that her home sacrifices were full expiation. There are women so weak that some moral standards remain necessary to their self-respect. They enlarge conscience and make laws for their own especial edification.

To-day she spoke to him suddenly of the possibility of widowhood. He turned upon her angrily and rebuked her for hard-heartedness and lack of taste. Aghast, wide-pupiled, she looked at him. For the first time she caught sight of something bad in him; something furtive and evil. He had always before walked for her a god among men, and this had been her excuse, such excuse as women clutch at. This cloud, which seemed the proverbial bolt out of the clear sky—no such can exist—exploded, and was dissipated. More favorable subjects to the calm enjoyment of a Spring morning were broached. Nevertheless, she pondered over it, and it dug two vertical lines in her cheeks; they were already very thin.

She was fading. Of a delicate organization, the smells and sights of the sick-room, with its unhealthy atmosphere and its confinement, the efforts to keep up appearances on cramped means, were telling upon her. Gaiety, sauciness, had already departed. There was a sweet, worn softness in its stead, and a little sadness. Her hands were slender, her rings loose. After their skirmish under the boughs Preston had noticed this. He had never done so before. It was just when she saw the wicked, ugly glint in those blue eyes, whose expression was usually so genial. It was the fashion to wear long, loose gloves, but long, loose gloves are expensive, and hers were not quite long enough. One hand was bare, the other arm was exposed too much for elegance between the elbow and the wrist. He, so passionate an admirer

of beauty, remarked that it had lost all roundness. And then something happened to him. An odd twinge under his waistcoat almost stopped his breath. Could it be indigestion? The cruel light died out of his face, and he sat staring at her, his mouth a trifle open, his regard fixed. It was certainly very peculiar. That night he sent her a dozen pairs of many-buttoned Suède gloves in a dainty box.

He was not a rich man, and she had never been willing to take presents from him. She simply could not. She did not. She did not explain why, to him or to herself. There is really nothing a man can give a woman except money—it is the only thing that protects her. It keeps people off of her—it is the amulet. Why, then, should she have shrunk from his presents as from blows? Mere convention, probably. Yet to her there seemed a demarcation—the demarcation between the lady and the . . . She did take these, however, and she sobbed herself to sleep, wondering.

When she got up to hand her husband his medicine she went to the mirror and looked at herself. She saw the two lines in her cheeks. She rubbed them with her fingers, and then got her powder puff and filled them with powder, and as she did so she sighed.

Preston's petulance increased rather than diminished. There came a time, as the years rolled on, when his whole character appeared to change. Men are satisfied with stagnant relations; women wish them to grow. Sunshine became the exception, not, as before, the rule. He was peevish, testy, even irascible. Nothing suited him. But, of course, there were bright days, days when he was very charming and charmed her anew. With these she warmed her chilled soul as best she could.

Sometimes it was such a little thing. One day he came to see her—a rainy afternoon. She was sitting in the public drawing-room of the lodging-house where she lived. She could have possessed a cottage in the country for

half what she spent, but she stayed in the city to be near to him. By her side crouched her dog. He was an old, half-blind animal that she had sheltered from girlhood—a terrier of doubtful ancestry. She was fond of animals. The dog was cross and snappish, and as Preston entered and disturbed him he growled and showed his teeth. Now, Laurence had not desired to come that afternoon, and had done so from a sense of duty. He resented that what had once been amusement should be growing into a burden, and he felt aggrieved. "It is an infernal bore," he had said to himself as he lagged up the steps. Now the dog's snarling reception gave him a pretext for vexation. He felt justified in kicking him and sending him under his mistress's petticoats, with an unceremonious expletive.

"What do you keep such a brute for, anyhow?" he asked of her, fiercely. "The malodorous, broken-winded wretch makes everybody ill."

She leaned down toward her forlorn favorite, that, at her invitation, leaped to her lap. She stroked him softly and gathered up his fat shapelessness protectingly against her bosom. She pressed him firmly in her slight arms.

"I keep him because I love him," she said, "and because he is Fred's only pleasure. It is very unfortunate that I have no servant to take him out, and you see he gets savage without exercise." A cleverer woman, a more highly strung one, would doubtless have delivered herself of this phrase with dramatic force and revengeful intent. He had sometimes himself felt annoyed at her supineness, at her lack of righteous indignation, of self-assertion. In all the years she had been his toy he could hardly recall a word of upbraiding, a glance of reproach. He looked for them now once more—in vain. He saw that she had spoken quite simply, without *arrière pensée*. He made what amends he could for his rudeness, and by-and-by pleaded a headache and got himself out once more into the street.

It was nearly dark. It was beginning to rain. The cold drops fell on

his face and hands. He shivered and opened his umbrella and pulled up his coat-collar. He almost ran before he reached the club where he had his chambers, but he could get no warmth into his veins. He felt again that strange uneasiness, that curious discomfort that came more and more often now after being in her company. "He is Fred's only pleasure," and "because I love him." As the words rang through his brain he was conscious of a mental pain so acute, so poignant, that he hurried into a café and ordered a hot stimulant, a proceeding foreign to him. Her very lack of dignity, her uncomplaining submission, seemed to-day to pierce him as with a knife. And—that other one—upstairs—whose "only pleasure" lay in the company of a mongrel cur and of the woman who dishonored him! That other . . . !

"My God!" he cried, almost aloud, as he sipped his brandy, "why didn't she spit upon me?" But this mood of contrition, like many others, proved ephemeral.

Nearly a year after this, however, he had an experience from which he rallied less quickly; in fact, it remained forever a landmark of memory. Afterward he formulated what he had vaguely misunderstood. It was again a mere triviality, one of those incidents scarce worth recording.

He had been to a splendid banquet in his world. He had sat for an hour and a half between two well-bred, luxurious, highly groomed women, who from the fish to the comfits had in turn cajoled his egotism and gratified his taste. One of them, a regnant young belle—a beautiful, cold girl—appealed strongly to his imagination. Poor Mrs. Quentell never had done that. It was her one great lack. The makeshifts of her lot precluded the entrance that never coexists with pity.

He had been so inspired by his neighbors—the other was a married woman of wit and fascination—that he had eaten and drunk sparingly. Now that it was eleven o'clock, as he ran up the steps of the ugly, frowning, narrow brown mansion where

his *bonne amie* dwelt, oddly enough he felt hungry. The contrast of this establishment with the marble palace he had left jarred on him, and he reflected that nothing could be more difficult than to get supper here. It was late to pay a visit, too late to go up to her sitting-room. But he felt like having a chat with her that night, and he was not one to deny himself.

Somehow his relations with Mrs. Quentell had managed to produce no positive scandal. Scandal is a wall knocked down; their wall still stood. As a partition it was rather thin and rickety, and yet it was there, and sufficed. In the beginning he had even arranged to be decently presented to the lady, so that their first unconventional encounter had been sanctified by custom's regulations. The other inhabitants of the house, no doubt, had surmises, and may have exchanged them, but they were too insignificant socially to count, and their cacklings were ineffectual. The treasure of the humble—obscurity—was Mrs. Quentell's. Naturally, she did not appreciate its privileges.

Now she came down to greet her lover with her usual exclamations of joy and of tenderness. They had become to him mere commonplaces, to be hardly noticed. He was still in a loquacious mood, and he sat down near her and began to tell her of the sparkling talk that there had been at the dinner-table which he had so lately quitted. Mrs. Quentell was one of those women who prefer caresses to conversation, but she could listen. If her silence was not suggestive, or her own comments stimulating, they were at least sympathetic. She hung upon his words, just because they were his, with an awe bordering on ecstasy.

He had become accustomed to this attitude of hers, and hardly himself realized how important a part it played in his life. In fact, the superficial and clandestine place she occupied in his existence was a difficult one to define. What he had entered into for six days, six weeks, six months, had lengthened into six years,

nay, eight—nay, more. He was himself aghast; but what is a man to do! When you beat against iron you are bruised, and flee. But when you beat against cotton-batting you remain. No blood is spilled; you have no case. Her perfect meekness always disarmed him. There were moments when she seemed necessary to him and she started into light, and others in which she could be relegated to the dark places where we keep shadows.

As the "parlor" was fireless, she wore a shawl over her shoulders. Like most American women, Mrs. Quentell dressed beyond her means. But to keep the two rooms that she required, and her private sitting-room, she had been forced this year to make concessions to her bank account. Her toilet had suffered. For him she invariably dressed prettily, but to-night she was tired, sleepy, had hardly looked for him. She was arrayed in a somewhat shabby blue merino wrapper. Her hair hung about limply, and then—the shawl! Her day had been one long trial. She had not been out because her invalid needed her, and he had been peculiarly fretful and exacting. She did not love him, but it is for those we do not love all our sacrifices are made, and her poverty and her grinding cares had well-nigh overwhelmed her. In a dull sort of helpless way she felt herself to be erring, but she did not suffer much from conscience. She did not have what the Presbyterians call the "realizing sense" of her degradation. Her principal suffering was from a shivering fear that if people knew they would strike her. She was a coward before exposure. Her love was the only thing she had; she groped after it blindly, like a baby in the night for its mother's breast. She had found it, and she had fought for it, rashly, desperately. With the dumb belief that God was merciful, she went to church and knelt behind columns, far back where the negroes sat eyeing her, and hardly dared look up while she prayed for her beloved. She prayed that he might be powerful and strong and happy and suc-

cessful and perfect, and that some day, somehow, he should be wholly hers and know how she loved him. For herself she had ceased to pray. It was all horribly false and paradoxical and sophistical. Of course, she had no business there at all, but I tell it as it was, and not as we would wish it to have been.

Coming fresh from the bright glory of those perfumed ladies, whose loveliness intoxicated him; from the myriad lamps and candles and flowers and music of the great palace of wealth, Mrs. Quentell in her faded gown might indeed strike him as a defenseless rival. He himself looked smart in his evening clothes, with a gardenia in his buttonhole. He sat down beside her and began to talk of the things that had been said and done where he had dined. He was reputed a good conversationalist. He was intellectual, fond of the cadences of prose and the measures of verse; his speech was eloquent from much thought and much reading.

There had been some talk of Christianity and its early monasticism.

"It was not the baths the early Christians fought against, but the orgies of their *entourage*," he was saying to her. "We are stupid when we think it was cleanliness they deprecated. The Roman bath was a mere apology for license."

He stopped. They looked at each other at the word "license." Never before had he felt so little drawn to her by the one spell she exerted over him. As he gazed at her faded lips, her white face, her thin throat, he asked himself how he could ever have been such an idiot. Uneasy at her anxious glance—she seemed to guess his reflection, and passed her hands through her hair, trying to put some order into its disarray—"I must be off," he said; "I am absurdly hungry. We sat an hour and a quarter at dinner, and I did not dine well, after all. They whisked the things away, and I was interested in the theme discussed, an unusually serious one for Mrs. Gresham's coterie. So good-night, my dear; I am going

round to a restaurant to get a bite." To his surprise Mrs. Quentell jumped from her chair and asked him to excuse her for a moment. She returned in five minutes with a little tray in her hand on which was a plate of fruit and nuts, some slices of cake and a bottle of claret and a glass.

"Dear," she said, "I, too, had no appetite for my dinner to-night, and I have had this fruit sent to my room. Will you eat of my supper?" and she held the platter out toward him.

He waved away her offer somewhat impatiently.

"What folly!" he said, brusquely. "You are compromising yourself. How can we eat here in this horrid public place!" The words were hardly uttered before he saw the pain he inflicted. Her smile died out, her eyelids fluttered and sank, a faint flush as of shame rose to her pale forehead.

"I thought to surprise and please you," she murmured, "but I dare say it was stupid."

As she put the things down quickly on a table which stood close by, as if stung by his rebuke, her shoulders had a mournful droop that gave her an appearance of unusual age. Yes, she was growing old! With this realization there shot through his being once more that profound emotion which had already shaken him. Oddly enough, he had begun to remark that it never so devastated him, was never so potent, as when she left his senses unclouded, failed to touch his artistic fancy. An anguish which he had never called by its right name invaded him, and, while she stood there faltering, unmindful of an open door, of possible intruders, the man fell on his knees before her—fell on his knees on the soiled carpet, groveled there, his head to her feet. "Dolly, little Dolly! pardon, pardon!"

Shocked and surprised at his unlooked-for abasement, she could only murmur softly, unintelligibly, bidding him rise, assuring him that he was already more than forgiven. But he could not be so quieted. He kept re-

peating: "Mercy! mercy! forgive! forgive!" And while she leaned to him with eyes full of passionate wonder, he seized her hands, wrung them wildly in his own, and rushed from her presence.

Laurence has never forgotten that night. He had cared for other women far more seriously. In fact, he had acknowledged to himself that this connection was born of the lightest sentiment that had ever seized him. Yet, whatever woes of life his past had held, never had he experienced the agony that now grasped his soul. Not a detail of his *liaison*—of the abominable part in it he had played—but came and knocked at his heart, beat in his brain its harsh refrain, sternly demanding reckoning and reparation. The cold sweat broke upon his forehead as he writhed upon his bed, rending the air of his apartment with a man's sobs, wetting his pillow with bitter, bitter tears.

He recalled vividly the sight of her arm where her shabby short glove had revealed it, and her effort to pull her sleeve over it that day in the arbor, the first time he had noticed that her youth was waning. And this small thing so tore him, seemed to him so infinitely touching, that he sprang from his bed to pace the floor. He remembered the episode of her dog, with his melancholy yellow eyes. With what affection had they looked into hers when the creature had sought refuge from his cruelty on her bosom! Mrs. Quentell, as I have said, had a love for animals, which is a key to temperament. He remembered her words to him then, and the horror of himself they produced. But, most of all, he realized that, should he live a thousand years, never, never, never would he forget her face when she had brought him her poor supper! And then he knew that what he experienced had a name, a name which religious people whisper, a name for which the murderer of a God had hung himself.

Remorse grappled him in its fetters of steel to gibe, mock, torture, wreck him—remorse and a pity so im-

mense, so boundless, so real, that the fabric of his selfish sensuality crumbled and was consumed in a purer flame.

When he sought her early the following day he was so haggard she was greatly grieved. Again and again he asked her to forgive. Forgive what? She hardly understood. How should she? He followed her about her sitting-room, unwilling to let go of her hands, which he kissed over and over again reverently and ardently, bedewing them with fresh tears.

Mrs. Quentell had one of those child-spirits that a kiss can soothe and still. There were no rancors that a soft word with her could not assuage. With all its sins—and they were, indeed, black—his was probably the deeper nature. It is certain that if Mr. Quentell had died the day after this phase of their moral drama, Laurence would have, as soon as decorum permitted, been led to the altar. But Mr. Quentell did not die.

When he did die, some years later, it is to be surmised that Mr. Preston and Mrs. Quentell had passed through various moods and vicissitudes. At the moment, as Fate would have it, they had quarreled. They had not communicated with each other for eight weeks—eight weeks that for him had held a dull incompleteness mingled with a certain sense of relief.

Never since that dreadful night had their intercourse been wholly free from an element of tragedy. He knew this had crept into it forever. Never, never, never more, if they continued to meet or if they parted, could it be eliminated. If wrenching from the present it must still crystallize to memory. Sometimes the devil played with him, the laugh of him rang in his ears. What a fool he had been! Was ever mouse caught in such a trap? He the mouse? Nay, she was the mouse, poor dear, who had been entrapped and slain.

After these eight weeks of her silence he almost hoped she was "getting over it," and the hope was genuine and generous. He was not

base enough to insist she should go on caring for him. Of course, if she could care for anyone else it would prove that she was not exactly what he had learned to believe her. But, on the whole, it would be blessed.

During these eight weeks Mrs. Quentell had suffered terribly, and new lines of pain had traced themselves upon her countenance. She had never wavered in all the years of her worship and allegiance; her idolatry was more imperious, more absorbing, more despairing than ever. In the meanwhile, "Fred," who continued practically bedridden, had been conveyed to the South, and it was there that he died.

Preston was just finishing his coffee and egg at his club. He was in a frame of mind of unwonted joviality. Black bats of the night fly away on some winds. To-day the weather was cloudless and cheerful outside, and the apartment where he sat was warm and cozy. Investments were looking up, and his health was magnificent. He was permeated by an unusual *bien être*; the pleasure of mere living was not yet quite lost to him, in spite of the anxieties that got into his blood. He was over forty, but he was still in the vigor and heartiness of a rich manhood. The vital fluids coursed within him as they had in his boyhood, with rather more than less impetus. He had awakened this morning with a sense of exuberance and power. Then, all at once, the hour gloomed, joy went out.

His glance lighted on a paragraph. It was to the effect that Mr. Quentell had expired in a certain hotel in St. Augustine. It was stated that a widow, no children, survived him. She had been with him at his death. This publicity of poor Frederick Quentell's death was merely owing to the fact that he had died in a Winter resort and in a hostelry. Any telegraphed news was an advertisement, even death being preferable to silence.

The announcement fell on him like the thud on a grave. His heart contracted and almost ceased to beat. She was liberated at last! When all

hypocrisies were laid aside there was no doubt that this piece of news should have been to Laurence an unmitigated satisfaction. We do not exactly desire the death of a person which we can nevertheless hear of with equanimity. The demise of the husband, even if he be no husband, of a coveted woman is a shock most men could support with resignation. The terrible fact was borne in upon Laurence that if it had been Mrs. Quentell herself, instead of her husband, he could not have felt much more profoundly distressed. Why? It had come. No subterfuge, no lying, would serve any more. He must meet the situation; he must decide.

Even before he received her short letter saying she was returning with the body, adding a word as to pecuniary embarrassments which would necessitate an immediate endeavor to gain her own living, he knew that there was no further skulking possible. In the vulgar parlance that comes to us grimly in its crude force at such moments, he must "face the music." The crisis was here.

It is one thing to touch misfortune from the outside, it is another to gather it and make it a part of ourself. Their lives, his and Mrs. Quentell's, had mingled, they had never amalgamated. He had always been able to take himself back. To do so had been a desired privilege. She was not one of those rare women who never pall. She was not one of those who have reserves that seem unfathomable. She gave too much; satiety with her was probable. With her there was no rugged note; it was all too cloying. Laurence had proved it.

There are women whom to kiss once is to be forever unrestful; on their lips men breathe the *inepuisable*. With others limitations are more quickly reached. Their accorded kiss is pleasant, no doubt, but devoid of promise. They are generally the best lovers; the others are wayward and full of mystery. Elusive and enigmatic, they torment and baffle, but they never weary. Yet, who

knows? are not these first ones, these whipped dogs of Fate, the conquerors, after all? In their own fashion, in their own time, they "arrive." They, too, can torture us. Their revenge, though slow, is certain. Their dumb and frightened faces haunt us; their cowering eyes can kill. Those upon whom the curse of feeling has been laid are their playthings. Though in our harsh moods we are inclined to think their power a mere trick of our fancy, born of the wanness of a cheek, the conformation of a brow, the pallor of a lip, and we are fain to brush them off like parasites that exhaust our nerve and clip our flight—we know in our higher moments that their influence is the triumph of the best in us, and the cry, in renunciation, "Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean!"

He remembered the frightful night of sorrow and of shame, since which he had rarely, if ever, said unkind words to her. He remembered other nights equally poisoned to him.

He girded himself up; he did what he could for her; he shared his income with her now, delicately but insistently; he put her, so to speak, on her feet. She seemed dazed. She was quiet and far away. They went to church together sometimes. She, under her heavy crêpe, knelt beside him. There was a certain tranquillity between them, and she was true to the dead where she had failed to be true to the living. "Fred" was almost avenged. Mrs. Quentell, though temperamentally gay and light, had not passed in vain through the destructive honeycombing processes of necessary duplicity. This experience of incessant vigilance and the more practical perplexities of a hard struggle with poverty had left indelible signs. She was *passée*, almost plain, save for that spiritualized mien that suffering brings, whose pathos appeals to the fine souls, but is lost on the profane.

In spite of her one great fault, which should have kept her earthly, nay, perhaps, because of it, there was

a wistful depth in her expressive eyes, as of some imprisoned essence panting for release, detached and waiting. The significance of the change in her did not fully reach Laurence. He obscurely realized that she was—different. Had passion died? Did she care for him less now that she was enfranchised? He had never judged her cynically, or he might have been inclined to smile at the lack of logic in women. They are, in fact, logical to an excess that men will never fathom, direct and clear, unless in willful blindness. She was feebly groping toward a better apprehension of tenderness than her past had evolved, that was all.

So, thinking it was over, save for that link of kindness which must, whatever came, exist between them, he explained many things to her. He told her now how wretched, how meagre a thing his love for her had been, if, indeed, it ever existed. He bared all the ugliness of his deception of her. He did not spare her or himself. He once more implored her to forgive him, and said: "Good-bye."

When he got into the air he was a free man. Somehow his freedom could not quite shake off its pall of oppressive melancholy. She had listened to him, blanched, dry-lipped, large-eyed. She had made no response. She had listened, and then she, too, had extended a trembling hand and said: "Good-bye."

But when he left her she fell forward on her face in a deadly stupor, from which no succor of friend or hastily summoned leech could rouse her. Would he come and take her hand? It was a woman friend who found him—perhaps she . . . knew. "Her spirit," she said, "seems to be fluttering there still, but there is death on her face." He went.

She lay, indeed, as one whom Azraël has felled. The sheet under her chin had the aspect of a shroud; a death-damp pearled under her hair. The orbit of her sunken lids was sharply defined in the faint lamp-light. He sank once more before

this woman, this fellow-creature he had wronged and hurt so deeply; sank to his knees, and there, in that hour, the last protest of the ego died, "scourged to his dungeon." A new dawn gleamed, a man-angel was born and bathed his wings in its illumination, and it was *he* that touched her fingers and bade her "arise." They were so cold. He blew hot breaths upon them. With infinite humility he folded them closely at his breast. He called her name.

Her lips palpitated for a moment, and then . . . she smiled.

Laurence's friends, when they heard of his marriage, were greatly amazed. The virtuous shook their heads and

marveled that he should saddle himself with a dowerless widow of uncertain age, little beauty and no position. It was evident she was an adventuress who had long plotted his destruction.

The affair was unsavory, equivocal, and would undoubtedly be punished. The "world's people," as the Shakers have it, more lenient, less mordacious, while deplored his folly, pitied him. There was no doubt he had "dished" himself. He had always an odd streak in him. They were indulgent, amused and passably curious. But when he took his wife in his arms and kissed the tears from her uplifted face he knew that out of the years of misery and doubt there had come certainty and strength.



MIDNIGHT IN THE CITY

HARK, the long strokes that tell the midnight hour!
Midnight! and still the feverish city's eyes
Are widely wakeful, for the tumult dies
Slowly, so slowly where the tall roofs tower.
The devotees of Pleasure's brilliant flower
Not yet have cast aside their frolic guise;
One well might dream, save for the purpling skies,
'Twere day, distorted by some baleful power.

But mark adown yon narrow thoroughfare,
Where quiet has crept in with soothing touch,
Those shadow-shrouded figures! Who are they?
Rapine and Shame crept from their evil lair,
Wheedling of lip, insatiate of clutch,
Lying in wait to fasten on their prey!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



SAGACIOUS PRECAUTION

BRIDEGROOM (*returning from the honeymoon*)—Do you keep this car thoroughly lighted going through the tunnel?

BRAKEMAN—Yes, sir.

BRIDEGROOM—All right. I'll go and get my wife.

STREPHON IN SUMMER

I

SKIES that make the sapphire pale—
Lavish-blossomed hill and dale—
Balm and bird-songs in the air—
Roses, roses everywhere.
What a charm o'er dale and hill is!
June is here, and fairest Phyllis.

II

Blushing velvet cheeks of peaches—
Whispering boughs—soft-whispered speeches—
Lush grass under swift scythes falling—
Far niente hours entralling.
Farewell, June!—and farewell, Phyllis!
Hail, July—and Amaryllis!

III

Curling waves on smooth sands stealing—
Dian silver shafts revealing—
Ghostlike bats' swift, soundless winging—
Far away, a sweet voice singing—
Stolen touch of fingers snowy—
August's here—and Chloe! Chloe!

FRANCIS BARINE.



TROUBLES OF THE RICH

JAGGLES—Since the Parvenues got into society I suppose they have had to brush up a little?
WAGGLES—Yes, indeed. At present they are practicing how to walk on a hardwood floor.



A COMMON CASE

MADGE—Isn't she of a rather uncertain age?
MARJORIE—Well, to tell the truth, she doesn't seem very certain of it herself.

THE WHITE DOE

By Clinton Ross

NOW you who have known the Town know the Dragon, and how suddenly she came into all that money, and how nice a daughter had she, and how, at Shepherd's in Cairo, she met the Lion (a real young British nobleman), and in Washington the Bear (a real Russian prince), and how she said to herself: "Lo, my daughter shall win a mighty title, and we shall no longer be reviled because our money was made yesterday."

What, perhaps, you don't know is that if the Dragon and her daughter, the Dryad, had not gone to Paulson's in the Great Woods, with the Lion (the Earl of Duesdale) and the Bear (Prince Marikof) in her train, the title surely would have been won. And, indeed, it would have been won if the Eagle (young Breckenridge), who was sad because the Dryad was followed by many lovers, had not seen the White Doe.

It happened the day of that meeting. Breckenridge, young, the morning in his eyes, stood by the lake, his two setters, Thor and Rufus, at his heels. A little wind rippled the lake's bosom and swayed the whispering pines. For the first time in many a day young Breckenridge was cheerful, and the world was all shining; and then, as he was by the lake's bank, he heard her voice.

She stood by the green lake like a Diana, and Thor and Rufus looked devotedly into her eyes.

"You?" young Breckenridge said, as if he were dreaming. "You are like a dryad."

"Ah, am I?—but a dryad at Paul-

son's. I had forgotten you had a lodge somewhere near here."

"A bit of a place for a man and the dogs. I never go to Paulson's."

"Ah, but you must walk back with me there. Yes, you must. Thor and Rufus want you to."

"And the Dryad?"

"Why, you mortal, yes," said she.

"And they all are there?"

"Yes, for mamma must needs show Lord Duesdale the woods."

"Ah, he is here," said young Breckenridge, turning sober, for all of the shining morning.

"He is a good fellow, and—and—" The Dryad laughed merrily.

"Oh, I see," said young Breckenridge; "and the Russian—"

"Prince Marikof."

"Yes, he is in our train," quoth the Dryad, demurely.

"And where do I come in?"

"You must be in our train, too. But—but I have heard, Ned, that you are too much pleased with Isabel—"

"I am," said Breckenridge.

But the Dryad only laughed.

"Ah, Dryad," said he, "how far away you are from me!"

"If I were a dryad I would dance some moonlit night under the pines, and I should see a demigod, you know, and— Oh, there they are!"

Young Breckenridge cursed the fate that had put Paulson's back here in the woods, which up to last year he had all to himself. And here was the polite world not two miles from the cabin where he came for his better self and to lose the town's bother.

The "they" were the Dragon—that ambitious lady—the boyish Eng-

lish nobleman, the tall, dark, handsome Russian attaché and Mary Manners.

"I have found him in his forest," said the Dryad, "mooning at the lake."

"Oh, the sun's been up some hours," expostulated young Breckenridge.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Breckenridge," said the Dragon, not, however, with cordiality.

And the Dryad was borne away by the Bear.

The little Earl, divining young Breckenridge's concern, came over to his side.

"Don't like that chap."

"Nor I," young Breckenridge said, fervently.

The other went on, nervously:

"Can't get over the tall buildings; think they are going to fall on me. Nor the newspapers that do fall on me, though this is the third time over. Why, this time ten reporters were waiting, just like the men in the customs; I had to be interviewed. Next morning they had my pictures—one paper gave the likeness of my man, Crimmins, for me. Caught him with a snap-shot, I fancy. Another stated I was going to appear in vaudeville, like Murdoch. Then I am going to repair Malmouth by marrying any one of a dozen millionairesses. But—that wasn't what I was going to say," he ended.

"Yes," said Breckenridge, lighting his pipe and again cursing Paulson, whose caravansary brought the world to him. Deeper in the forest he must go—deeper, ever deeper—as a man who seeks peace.

"You know, I like you," the other blurted out.

Breckenridge said something.

"And I don't like that Bear."

"Nor I," Breckenridge remarked.

"Well, you know that talk about an Anglo-American alliance. As the fellows said in Cuba, 'They're Anglo-Saxons.' Now, what do you say—"

"To a compact of the Eagle and the Lion against foreigners? I agree," said young Breckenridge, with an

amused smile. "You have the advantage; I haven't a penny—only a little ambition. Some day I may be a great lawyer, but what's the use of some day?"

"So I say; nor have I many pennies."

"But a title."

"That's an advantage with Mrs. Fairleigh, but with her—"

"I don't know. She's ambitious."

"But it's a compact."

"Against the Bear; yes, to be sure."

Late that night young Breckenridge sat smoking over a burning log. Thor and Rufus slumbered at his feet, and old Styles, the hunter, his comrade, told many a tale of the great woods and other mysteries.

"If you see a white doe you will have luck," said old Styles. "I've seen 'em—now a half-dozen times—and I wouldn't raise a gun agin 'em, not I—not I. My grandfather told me not to, and told me how once he had seen one and shot at it, and he, the best shot in the woods, never hit it. I swan! he never hit it. It just stood still and looked at him, sort o' reproachful like, and then walked slowly into the bushes. But he had shot at it, and goin' home he found my brother Jim—him that died—filled with shot. Jim, you see, had been walkin' in the woods, and the shot came from nobody knew where. Grandfather was 'most crazy, knowin' it was from his gun. Never shoot at a white doe."

"And your brother?" asked young Breckenridge, abstractedly.

"He died, of course," said Styles, philosophically, as if that were an incident necessary to the story.

"I am going out for a walk," said young Breckenridge, rising. The dogs raised their heads and followed him out under the trees. The moon was swimming in a limpid blue. As they walked on Breckenridge's spirit was heavy. He noticed not the call of an owl nor the rustling of scampering shy creatures.

He must have gone a mile, when, at the edge of a glade, he noted the

dogs, and then a white, ghostly creature looked into his eyes. For a full moment the doe and the man gazed at each other with wonder—wonder on the man's part that the white doe was so near Paulson's—and then it seemed to fade into the moonshine.

But the dogs had not noted it, and why not?

He rubbed his eyes in very wonder, and then the white doe became a woman's figure in shimmering white, and she was patting the dogs.

"Yes, it is I, Rufus; I, Thor, and here is your master."

"You dryad!" said young Breckenridge.

"No, I am Diana; and would you have me stay in? It is stupid in there—the Town in the Forest."

"Ah! I walked farther than I thought. This is the glade back of Paulson's."

"Don't you see the glimmer of the lake?"

"I think, Dryad, I only see you."

The roll of the orchestra at Paulson's reached them.

"Let us have a turn here."

And the Dryad nodded, and, to the wonder of Thor and Rufus, who ran madly about, the Dryad and young Breckenridge footed the merry waltz paces on the greensward; to the wonder, too, of one who saw them through a rift in the leaves, and who, with a laugh, turned back.

"Oh, the forest, the forest—it makes me glad."

"No," said young Breckenridge; "let us say love."

"Yes," said the Dryad at last, "let us say love."

They came out of the edge of the

forest to Paulson's, and there were the Bear frowning and the Dragon severe. How indiscreet a girl the Dryad! Only the Lion looked glad. Young Breckenridge drew him aside.

"You know, that compact is off."

"Oh, no, it isn't!" the Lion expostulated. "I kept Marikof from finding you."

"You kept——?"

"We were sent out to look for Miss Fairleigh. I saw you there, and—I told Marikof I didn't."

"My dear fellow," said young Breckenridge.

"And seeing you, you know," the Lion went on, impulsively, "made me think of a little girl in Surrey, who's poor; but I am going back to her."

The next morning young Breckenridge said to old Styles:

"I saw a white doe in the forest last night, or thought I did."

"So near Paulson's? It's strange. But you will have luck."

"I have had it," said young Breckenridge.

Yet a mighty battle was to be fought with the Dragon before she was forced to surrender. Then she said: "Since you will, you will. There must be no scandal, for I see you will run away. But Lord Duesdale will be best man. It will read fairly well."

In the time of the woodcock and partridge the Dryad and young Breckenridge and Thor and Rufus scoured the Great Woods, and the White Doe, unscathed, looked out from a leafy screen on the merry Autumnal world, where was neither Dragon, nor Lion, nor Bear.



RECOMPENSE

I JOURNEYED far to steal a kiss;
Miss Redlips thought me silly;
Yet sunbeams take an awful jaunt
To merely kiss a lily.

JASPER BARNETT COWDIN.

A COLONIAL ROSE

DE ROCHAMBEAU came riding down
 On his prancing charger through the town;
 With careworn wrinkle and weary frown
 His brow was shaded;
 And she, with a gesture debonair,
 Threw him a rose from her powdered hair—
 The fairest maid of Washington Square,
 In gown brocaded.

Fled for a moment war and wile
 As he caught the rose with courtly smile,
 And thought of a maid of France, the while
 His glance had met her—
 A maid of France, of an ancient race,
 A master painted her then, a face
 Whose piquant charm and dainty grace
 Let none forget her.

And again he saw the old château
 Where the roses hung in garlands low
 When he rode away, long years ago—
 She died soon after.
 Ah, roguish maid of Washington Square,
 When the gray old Frenchman saw you fair,
 You little knew why he lingered there
 To hear your laughter.

CHARLOTTE BECKER.



AT THE OCEAN SIDE

DOLLY DEARGIRL—I met Cissie Careless at the hop.
 SUSIE SWEETTHING—Oh, tell me! What did she have off?



ON THE GRAND TOUR

BRAGG—I've just been over to the information bureau.
 ROBINSON—Well, did you succeed in telling them anything they didn't already know?

THE STRIDING PLACE

By Gertrude Atherton

WEIGALL, albeit a good sportsman, was wont to tire early in August of grouse-shooting. To stand propped against a sod fence while his host's workmen routed up the birds with long poles and drove them toward the waiting guns, made him feel himself a parody on the ancestors who had roamed the moors and forests of this West Riding of Yorkshire in hot pursuit of game worth the killing. But when in England in August he always accepted whatever proffered for the season, and invited his host to shoot pheasants on his estates in the South. The amusements of life, he argued, should be accepted with the same philosophy as its ills.

It had been a bad day. A heavy rain had made the moor so spongy that it fairly sprang beneath the feet. Whether or not the grouse had haunts of their own, wherein they were immune from rheumatism, the bag had been small. The women, too, were an unusually dull lot, with the exception of a new-minded *debutante* who bothered Weigall at dinner by demanding the verbal restoration of the faded paintings on the vaulted stone roof above them.

But it was no one of these things that sat on Weigall's mind as, when the other men went up to bed, he let himself out of the hall and sauntered down to the river. His intimate friend, the companion of his boyhood, the chum of his college days, his fellow-traveler in many lands, the man for whom, after his father, he possessed stronger affection than for all men, had mysteriously disappeared two days ago, and his track might have

sprung to the upper air for all trace he had left behind him. He had been a guest on the adjoining estate during the past week, shooting with the fervor of the true sportsman, making love in the intervals to Adeline Cavan, and apparently in the best of spirits. As far as was known there was nothing to lower his mental mercury, for his rent-roll was a large one, Miss Cavan blushed whenever he looked at her, and, being one of the best shots in England, he was never happier than in August. The suicide theory was preposterous, all agreed, and there was as little reason to believe him murdered. Nevertheless, he had walked out of Aire Castle two nights ago without hat or overcoat, and had not been seen since.

The country was being patrolled night and day. A hundred keepers and workmen were beating the woods and poking the bogs on the moors, but as yet not so much as a handkerchief had been found.

Weigall did not believe for a moment that Wyatt Gifford was dead, and although it was impossible not to be affected by the general uneasiness, he was disposed to be more angry than frightened. Gifford had been an incorrigible practical joker at Cambridge, and by no means had outgrown the habit; it would be like him to cut across the country in his evening clothes, board a cattle train and amuse himself with a presentiment of the sensation in West Riding.

However, Weigall's affection for his friend was too deep to companion with tranquillity in the present state of doubt, and, instead of going to bed early with the other men, he deter-

mined to walk until ready for sleep. He went down to the river and followed the path through the woods. There was no moon, but the stars sprinkled their cold light upon the pretty belt of water flowing placidly past wood and ruin, between green masses of overhanging rocks or sloping banks tangled with tree and shrub, leaping occasionally over stones with the harsh notes of an angry scold, to recover its equanimity the moment the way was clear again.

It was very dark in the depths where Weigall trod. He smiled as he recalled a remark of Gifford's: "An English wood is like a good many other things in life—very promising at a distance, but a hollow mockery when you get within. You see daylight on both sides, and the sun freckles the very bracken. Our woods need the night to make them seem what they ought to be—what they once were, before our ancestors' descendants demanded so much more money, in these so much more various days."

Weigall strolled along, smoking and thinking of his friend, his pranks—many of which had done more credit to his imagination than this—and recalling conversations that had lasted the night through. Just before the end of the London season they had walked the London streets one hot night after a dance, discussing the various theories of the soul's destiny. That afternoon they had met at the coffin of a college friend whose mind had been a blank for the past three years. Some months previously they had called at the asylum to see him. His expression had been senile, his face imprinted with the record of debauchery. In death the face was placid, intelligent, without ignoble lineation—the face of the man they had known at college. Weigall and Gifford had had no time to comment there, and the afternoon and evening were full; but, coming forth from the house of festivity together, they had reverted almost at once to the topic.

"I cherish the theory," Gifford had said, "that the soul sometimes lingers in the body after death. During mad-

ness, of course, it is an impotent prisoner, albeit a conscious one. Fancy its agony, and its horror! What more natural than that, when the life-spark goes out, the tortured soul should take possession of the vacant skull and triumph once more for a few hours while old friends look their last? It has had time to repent while compelled to crouch and behold the result of its work, and it has shrivelled itself into its former condition of comparative innocence. If I had my way I would stay inside my bones until the coffin had gone into its niche, that I might obviate for my poor old comrade the tragic impersonality of death. And I should like to see justice done to it, as it were—to see it lowered among its ancestors with the ceremony and solemnity that are its due. I am afraid that if I dissevered myself too quickly I should yield to curiosity and hasten to investigate the mysteries of space."

"You believe in the soul as an independent entity, then—that it and the vital principle are not one and the same?"

"Absolutely. The body and soul are twins, life comrades—sometimes friends, sometimes enemies, but always loyal in the last instance. Some day, when I am tired of the world, I shall go to India and become a mahatma, solely for the pleasure of receiving proof during life of this independent relationship."

"Suppose you were not sealed up properly, and returned after one of your astral flights to find your earthly part unfit for habitation? It is an experiment I don't think I should care to try, unless even juggling with soul and flesh had palled."

"That would not be an uninteresting predicament. I should rather enjoy experimenting with broken machinery."

The high wild roar of water smote suddenly upon Weigall's ear and checked his remembrance. He left the wood and walked out on the huge slippery stones which nearly close the River Wharfe at this point, and watched the waters boil down into the narrow pass with their furious, un-

tiring energy. The black quiet of the woods rose high on either side. The stars seemed colder and whiter just above. On either hand the perspective of the river might have run into a rayless cavern. There was no lonelier spot in England, nor one which had the right to claim so many ghosts, if ghosts there were.

Weigall was not a coward, but he recalled uncomfortably the tales of those that had been done to death in the Strid.* The yarn of the Boy of Egremont had been disposed of by the practical Whitaker; but countless others, more venturesome than wise, had gone down into that narrow, boiling course, never to appear in the still pool a few yards beyond. Below the great rocks which form the walls of the Strid was believed to be a natural vault, on to whose shelves the dead were drawn. The spot had an ugly fascination. Weigall stood, visioning rotting skeletons, uncoffined and green, the home of the eyeless things which had devoured all that had covered and filled that rattling symbol of man's mortality; then fell to wondering if anyone had essayed the Strid of late. It was covered with slime; he had never seen it look so treacherous.

He shuddered and turned away, impelled, despite his manhood, to flee the spot. As he did so, something tossing in the foam below the fall—something as white, yet independent of it—caught his eye and arrested his step. Then he saw that it was describing a contrary motion to the rushing water—an upward backward motion. Weigall stood rigid, breathless; he fancied he heard the crackling of his hair. Was that a hand? It thrust itself still higher above the boiling foam, turned sidewise, and four frantic fingers were distinctly visible against the black rock beyond.

Weigall's superstitious terror left him. A man was there, struggling

to free himself from the suction beneath the Strid, swept down, doubtless, but a moment before his arrival, perhaps as he stood with his back to the current.

He stepped as close to the edge as he dared. The hand doubled as if in imprecation, shaking savagely in the face of that force which leaves its creatures to immutable law; then spread wide again, clutching, expanding, crying for help as audibly as the human voice.

Weigall dashed to the nearest tree, dragged and twisted off a branch with his strong arms, and returned as swiftly to the Strid. The hand was in the same place, still gesticulating as wildly; the body was undoubtedly caught in the rocks below, perhaps already half-way along one of those hideous shelves. Weigall let himself down upon a lower rock, braced his shoulder against the mass beside him, then, leaning out over the water, thrust the branch into the hand. The fingers clutched it convulsively. Weigall tugged powerfully, his own feet dragged perilously near the edge. For a moment he produced no impression, then an arm shot above the waters.

The blood sprang to Weigall's head; he was choked with the impression that the Strid had him in her roaring hold, and he saw nothing. Then the mist cleared. The hand and arm were nearer, although the rest of the body was still concealed by the foam. Weigall peered out with distended eyes. The meagre light revealed in the limp cuffs links of a peculiar device. The fingers clutching the branch were as familiar.

Weigall forgot the slippery stones, the terrible death if he stepped too far. He pulled with passionate will and muscle. Memories flung themselves into the hot light of his brain, trooping rapidly upon each other's heels, as in the thought of the drowning. Most of the pleasures of his life, good and bad, were identified in some way with this friend. Scenes of college days, of travel, where they had deliberately sought adventure and stood

* "This striding-place is called the
"Strid."

A name which it took of yore;
A thousand years hath it borne the
name,
And it shall a thousand more."

between one another and death upon more occasions than one, of hours of delightful companionship among the treasures of art, and others in the pursuit of pleasure, flashed like the changing particles of a kaleidoscope. Weigall had loved several women; but he would have flouted in these moments the thought that he had ever loved any woman as he loved Gifford Wyatt. There were so many charming women in the world, and in the thirty-two years of his life he had never known another man to whom he had cared to give his intimate friendship.

He threw himself on his face. His wrists were cracking, the skin was torn from his hands. The fingers still gripped the stick. There was life in them yet.

Suddenly something gave way. The hand swung about, tearing the branch from Weigall's grasp. The body had been liberated and flung outward, though still submerged by the foam and spray.

Weigall scrambled to his feet and sprang along the rocks, knowing that the danger from suction was over and that Gifford must be carried straight to the quiet pool. But would his brain be beaten out against the walls before he reached that haven, or what little life

was in him smothered? Gifford was a fish in the water and could live under it longer than most men. If he survived this, it would not be the first time that his pluck and science had saved him from drowning.

Weigall reached the pool. A man in his evening clothes floated on it, his face turned toward a projecting rock over which his arm had fallen, upholding the body. The hand that had held the branch hung limply over the rock, its white reflection visible in the black water. Weigall plunged into the shallow pool, lifted Gifford in his arms and returned to the bank. He laid the body down and threw off his coat that he might be the freer to practice the methods of resuscitation. He was glad of the moment's respite. He had not dared to look at Gifford's face, to feel the head. The hesitation lasted but a moment. There was no time to lose.

He turned to his prostrate friend. As he did so, something strange and disagreeable smote his senses. For a half-moment he did not appreciate its nature. Then his teeth clacked together, his feet, his outstretched arms pointed toward the woods. But he sprang to the side of the man and bent down and peered into his face. There was no face.



METEMPSYCHOSIS

I WONDER, dear, if it be true,
As one old school has said,
That in some other form our souls
Shall live when we are dead?

O sinuous being, lithe and strange,
I know not which of two
Of all their creatures, after death,
The gods will make of you.

Soft tiger-soul, snake-spirit shy,
Of you which will they make?—
A velvet-padded hunger, or
A shadow-loving snake?

ARTHUR STRINGER.

THE HIGHWAYMAN

A DRAMATIC ROMANCE

By Joe Lincoln

SCENE—A hotel in the mountains. Time, Summer.

FROM HIS DIARY

July 15—Fair. Arrived here on the noon train. It does seem good to get away from business, if only for a month's vacation. Made a very pleasant discovery this afternoon. Miss A— is here, and, like the mountain scenery, is more bewitching than ever. She came down to dinner with her aunt. Recognized me across the dining-room, and bowed. I must contrive to meet her to-morrow.

July 16—Fair. Met Miss A— and her aunt at breakfast. Her younger brother Robert is here also. Bright boy of about fourteen; tall for his age. Chatted with them for an hour or so. Strolled about a little. In the afternoon, Robert, Miss A— and I bowed a few strings. She is as graceful as a lily. Glad I came.

July 17—Fair. Went for a drive with the A—s. Golf in the afternoon. Miss A— plays well, and is afraid of nothing. She is evidently very romantic. Tells me she likes Walter Scott and Anthony Hope. Odd coupling of names, it seems to me. Says she loves brave men and adores soldiers. Glad I'm in the militia. Hop this evening. Two dances with Miss A—.

July 20—Fair and warmer. Golf with Miss A— this morning. Rowing with Miss A— and aunt, of course, this afternoon. Hop this evening. Four dances with Miss

FROM HER DIARY

July 15—Lovely day. Aunt and I went for a stroll this morning. A number of new guests came on the noon train, and among them—pleasant surprise—Mr. B—. He is as handsome as ever. He recognized me across the dining-room this evening and bowed. A man—and especially an old acquaintance—is a delightful rarity here. I must contrive to meet him to-morrow.

July 16—Beautiful day. Mr. B— came over to our table during breakfast. He is up here for a month's vacation. Introduced him to aunt and Bob. Aunt thought him rather nice-looking. In the afternoon bowed a bit with Bob and Mr. B—. He is as strong as a giant. I am very glad we didn't go to the seashore this Summer.

July 17—Another lovely day. Mr. B— took us for a drive this morning. Golf in the afternoon. He plays a good game. Gave him my views on books and persons. He likes the very same authors that I do. Isn't that nice? Dancing this evening. Two-step and a waltz with Mr. B—.

July 20—Lovely weather and warmer. Golf with Mr. B— in the forenoon. Delightful row on the lake this afternoon— auntie, Mr. B— and myself. Three two-steps

A——. Believe I'm getting soft in that direction. Must look out.

July 23—Fair and still warmer. The usual round. Golf, driving, dancing, etc. She is the most wonderful girl in the world. I really believe I've met my fate. But suppose she should refuse me? Heavens! I don't dare think of it.

July 28—Nasty day. Cold, fog and rain.

Something's up! She was as charming as ever this morning, but as cold as Greenland in the afternoon. I had about made up my mind to ask her, but she was so confoundedly frigid that I positively shivered. I certainly haven't *done* anything to displease her. She must have heard some infernal lie about me. I *must* find out what it is. Happy thought! Perhaps Bob can help me.

July 29—Still cold and cloudy, but with prospects of clearing.

Bob is a brick! I spoke to him this morning and promised him a dollar if he would find out why his sister was so cold to me. He came to me this afternoon with the whole story. It seems that a girl friend has written her that lie that Van Clubson has been telling about my being a coward. Van and I will have a heart-to-heart talk later on. I told Bob my real reason for not going with the regiment, which was, of course, the *master's* illness and the doctor's warning that the shock of my going might kill her. Bob says it wouldn't be best to tell "Sis," as he calls her, that as yet, for she might think it only an excuse. He says the way to convince her of my bravery is by ocular demonstration. He suggests the following in-

and a waltz with Mr. B—— this evening. He is very fascinating. I must beware.

July 23—Beautiful, warm day. Golf in the forenoon. Then a drive, and the hop as usual. He is perfectly splendid. I am afraid I'm in love with him. I *think* he cares for me. Oh, dear! suppose it should be only a Summer flirtation on his part?

July 28—Horrid day. Oh, dear! something *awful* has happened. I wrote Grace a few days ago, and told her all about him and how splendid he was, and everything. And to-day I had a letter from her, and she says not to mention it to a soul, but that when the Spanish War broke out and all the volunteer regiments were ordered South, Mr. B—— refused to go, and that it made a lot of talk, and many people thought him a coward. Mr. Van Clubson told her the story. A *coward*! Just *think* of it! a *coward*!! I cried for an hour when I read the letter, and I have been as cold as an icicle all the afternoon. I can't believe it to be true; but, oh, dear! if it *should* be! I could forgive anything but cowardice. What *shall* I do?

July 29—Horrid weather, but may clear to-morrow.

I am about to do an awful thing. I am crazy to find out the truth about Mr. B——. If he is a coward I *must* know it at once. I told Bob Grace's story, and he said it was probably a "big lie." He said he knew of a way to find out whether Mr. B—— was brave or not, and find out at once. There is to be a concert at the church to-morrow night and auntie isn't going. Bob's plan is to leave Mr. B—— and me at the church, run on ahead to a lonely spot on the road to the hotel, and wait for us. When we come along he is to spring out upon us with his cartridge pistol and a mask made of black cloth. If Mr. B—— complies with his demand for money, I shall *know* he is a coward. If he doesn't, and dashes at the sup-

genious method: There have been a number of "hold-ups" and highway robberies in this vicinity lately, and Bob proposes to play robber and waylay her and me on the road home from the church concert to-morrow night. I am to do the heroic and show her my contempt for danger. Bob is to be masked, and stand in the shadow so that she will not recognize him. It seems rather a contemptible trick, but I can explain later, and "all's fair in love and war."

I must win her; that's all! Bob is to have five dollars for his masquerade. Here's luck!

July 30—Splendid weather! It's all right. That boy is a jewel, and as for his sister!—I'm the luckiest chap on earth. Everything went off splendidly. We walked home alone, and it was moonlight and lonely as the grave. When Bob appeared by the roadside he *did* look scary, but Margery—my Margery—by Jove! isn't it nice to be able to write that?—was as plucky as they make 'em, and screamed but once. I flatter myself that I laid on the heroics an inch thick, and put the miscreant to flight in no time. And after that—well, she praised me and looked so angelic that I braced up and asked her, and was accepted. Oh, that walk home! It's too sacred to put on paper. Bob, shrewd little rascal, made me give him ten dollars instead of five. Said if I didn't he'd tell his sister.

He got the ten.

By Jingo! I'm a lucky dog! But I feel rather mean about playing such a trick on that dear, unsuspecting girl.

posed highwayman, I shall know he is a *real hero*, and shall be the happiest girl in the world. Bob will stand in the shadow so that Mr. B——won't know him, and will run away if he is attacked. It seems like an awfully mean trick, but I *must* know the truth. I can explain later if he *is* brave; and if he isn't, I shall never speak to him again. Oh, dear! what *will* happen? I'm all of a tremble. Bob has made me promise to give him two dollars for his highwayman's work.

July 30—Heavenly day! I'm engaged—engaged to Jack—*my* Jack! Isn't that too sweet for anything? I owe it all to Bob. He played the highwayman beautifully, and when he sprang out at us and cried: "Money or your life!" he startled even me for a moment. But Jack was like a lion. He said, as cool as could be: "Don't be alarmed, Miss A——," and stepped in front of me. Then he cried: "Never! you miserable scoundrel!" and fairly leaped at Bob's throat, right in the teeth of that leveled pistol. It was *beautiful*. Bob ran away, and when Jack returned from the pursuit he was *so* tender and kind. Then the dear fellow proposed so prettily, and when I said "yes," he— But I'm not going to write another word.

Bob—little sinner—made me give him five dollars instead of two. Said if I didn't he'd tell Jack.

I'm so happy! But I feel awfully mean to think of the trick I played on that darling, innocent fellow.

Extract from a letter written by the highwayman to his chum:

So you see, Billy, I played it pretty well. Five dollars from Sis and eleven dollars from her mash is a pretty good start toward that boat we want to buy. They don't dare say no for fear I'll give it away, and I'm going to strike each of them for another five next week. It's better than the Klondike.

Your affec. chum,
BOB.



BALLADE OF THE EVERLASTING AMATEUR

She can recite; from "Curfew shall not ring,"
 To "Out, damned spot," unfearingly she goes,
 Stopping, perhaps, for some such simple thing
 As *Desdemona's* wrongs or *Juliet's* woes;
 And she knows every gesture, every pose
 That's taught by rule, and she is very sure
 That she could rival Bernhardt if she chose;
 The dear, the everlasting amateur!

She paints; alas, I write it sorrowing.
 With art's pure flame her gentle bosom glows,
 And so she paints! All pleasures have their sting,
 And on her pictures with ambiguous "Ohs!"
 And "Ahs!" alike look lenient friends and foes,
 While critics neither pity nor endure;
 Though she—she deems them Millets and Corots,
 The dear, the everlasting amateur!

Mistress of music she, and she can sing.
 In most amazing trills and tremolos;
 On every instrument, or wind or string,
 She plays. Again, with well-intentioned blows
 The statue carves. She writes in verse and prose.
 Pretty or plain, distinguished or obscure,
 Of her in all these rôles the wide world knows,
 The dear, the everlasting amateur!

L'ENVOI

Though oft of her the world aweary grows,
 And all her charms most gladly would abjure,
 Perennially she still her gift bestows,
 The dear, the everlasting amateur!

CARLOTTA PERRY.



ABOUT READY TO SETTLE DOWN

"THAT old man goin' by," said the landlord of the tavern at Yaphank to the Summer Man, indicating with a jerk of his thumb a bent and time-worn figure that was doddering down the village street, "is Uncle Zimri Tarpy. He's lived here all his life—'most eighty-six years."

"H'm!" commented the city man, with mild facetiousness. "He must like it here pretty well by this time!"

"Oh, yes; he says he guesses he'll make this village his permanent residence."

ANGELS UNAWARES

By Will N. Harben

HER studio window looked over a waste of brown roofs toward Harlem. As her visitor, his elbows on his knees, leaned toward her easel and watched her deft, water-dipped brush touching up a landscape, he thought that he had never in his own country seen such beautiful and yet strong, tapering hands, such a pleasing contour of body, such shapely, high-instepped feet.

"Ah, it's boiling!" she cried, suddenly, indicating with a flourish of her brush a copper tea-kettle hanging over a flaring gas jet. "Do take it down, Mr. Douglas, while I measure in the tea. It will snap its lid off if you don't hurry."

As he rose he looked almost a giant. He had a good-natured, florid face, broad shoulders and the massive hands of an Englishman addicted to outdoor sports. She laughed merrily as he awkwardly spilled some of the water in filling the teapot she was holding.

"You have not told me what success you have had to-day," she said, as they sat down at her little round table to wait for the tea to draw.

"My usual luck." He spoke with a musical drawl, while a rather sensitive smile lay on his face. "They invariably ask: 'What experience have you had, sir?' and when I tell them the truth they seem unable to dismiss me quickly enough. It does no good to plead that I can learn the work—they are not school-teachers in your American banks and counting-houses."

"But surely," said the beautiful girl, raising her brows, "surely you've

had *some* business experience in England?"

For a moment he avoided her eyes as he slowly stirred the sugar in the cup she had filled; then he said, frankly: "I am sorry to have to confess to so industrious a little creature as you, Miss Buford, that I have never led what you would consider a very useful life."

He paused, and the artist looked down into her cup. She had not intended to direct the conversation toward such personal affairs, but he seemed bent on further disclosures.

"Up to his death my governor was a pleasure-loving chap, who took life easy, as had his father before him. He managed to put me through at Oxford, but when he died, only a few months ago, he left nothing but a lot of debts on his estates."

"You are a younger son?" exclaimed Evelyn Buford, tentatively.

"No, I am the only son, but I have a sister. She has met adversity better than I, for she was taken as governess into a family, and is doing well. I first went to London, but they wouldn't have me there. You know the English commercial world has no faith in the ability of a man not born in trade. In my better days I had met a young American financier at the seat of a friend of mine in Sussex—a Mr. Guy Hawley. He told me a lot about Wall street, and, really, I came over thinking he might help me make some connection, but he is traveling in the West, and I missed him. I was in a bad plight when I sailed. I had only twenty pounds. Half of that went for my passage on a slow vessel, and on the remainder I have

defied starvation in my little room in this house."

The speaker paused. The eyes of his companion were fixed sympathetically on his face. She had started to refill his cup, but absent-mindedly put the teapot down. "Are you really in earnest?" There was a note of startled pain in her soft, Virginian accent. "Is it possible that you have managed to get along for two months on so little as that?"

"My wants are quite simple, Miss Buford," taking a lump of sugar from a paper bag and pouring his own tea.

"But mine have not been!" cried the girl, with sharp significance; "oh, to think that I——!"

She put her handkerchief to her eyes; her face was flushed, and her breast heaved.

"What is the matter?" he questioned, in a startled, wondering tone; but she did not uncover her face.

"What is it, dear Miss Buford?" he repeated. "Really, I did not mean to touch upon anything that——"

She uncovered her face and looked at him steadily. "You need not think you kept me in the dark, Mr. Douglas. I found out how good you were to me when I was ill. The doctor said I must have medicine, and my purse was empty. The janitor told you about it, and you gave him money. He promised you that I should never know, but he confided it to his wife, and she told me."

"Oh, rubbish, Miss Buford!" His face was crimson, and he did not know what to do with his hands.

"And that was not all," ran on the girl. "You went without your meals. The janitor watched you buying apples, and noticed that you stopped going to the café around the corner. Do you think I shall ever, ever forget that?"

"Oh, don't talk that way, Miss Buford." Douglas awkwardly twisted his red fingers across his knee. "If you don't stop I shall not dare to come to your studio again. Really, you know, you are not treating me hospitably."

"I wonder," went on the girl,

thoughtfully, "if all your countrymen are so good to poor, defenseless girls? I am glad I met you, for you have raised my ideal of men. If I should ever hear men called selfish again I should want to fight."

"I don't want to be considered any better than the general run of fellows," said the Englishman, frankly, and as he spoke there was a new light in his eyes. "In fact, I can't remember ever doing even a trifle like that for a woman before. I don't take any credit for it. It was because it was you—you, Miss Buford. That dark, stormy night, when the wind and rain beat like the wings of a thousand devils on my rattling window and on the roof over my head, and the janitor told me he thought you might—might pass out into it forever, I felt as if you and I were here quite alone. I crept to your door and crouched there nearly all night, listening to your moaning; when you stopped and went to sleep I thought you were——"

His voice broke. It had been the nearest approach he had ever made to a declaration of love. She was white with suppressed emotion. She had directed her half-frightened glance to the window. It was as if she dared not trust her eyes to his. A moment later he broke the silence.

"I must tell you how much I was relieved the other day when you told me you had a wealthy aunt living in New York. I was under the impression——"

"That I am very poor? And so I am, Mr. Douglas. My aunt, who is the widow of my father's brother, is quite rich and belongs to the most exclusive set here, but I shall never go to her for aid. I wrote to her when I first came to New York to earn my living. She called to see me, but when she had puffed up all those dusty, unlighted flights, and her footman had exhausted a box of matches in finding the number on my door, she was ready for a row. She had heard that I had come into a fortune, but soon sniffed a contradiction to the

report out of my poor studio. She lectured me about living here without a chaperon, and in a long tirade, delivered mostly to my back as I stood at the window, she spoke of my father as being lazy and improvident, and said he was better dead. When she said that, I moved to the door and laid my hand on the latch. She knew what I meant and left. I did not ask her to call again, and she has not called, though she once sent me some flowers."

"She thought you had inherited money; I see," remarked the Englishman, with a smile.

"Yes; years ago, in his best days, my father owned a large tract of land near Chicago. In some way other people took illegal possession of it, and it has grown to be of great value. I am my father's only heir, and my lawyers have had my claim before the courts a long time. Every now and then they write me that success is close at hand, but something always happens to prevent my winning. I have given it up entirely now. My aunt had heard that I had actually won the suit. New York life has spoiled her, but, in spite of all, I really feel drawn toward her. I can't forget that papa loved her. When I was so ill I was tempted to send for her, but my pride would not let me."

"I admire that in you," declared Douglas. "If you had not been poor and proud I should not have liked you so much."

"Our poverty *did* draw us together, did it not?" For an instant Evelyn allowed her soft glance to rest fearlessly on his face.

"That was it," he said. Then he seemed to pull himself together suddenly. He was recalling a resolution he had formed several days ago not to allow her to see how dear she had become to him. He told himself, too, with a thrill of delight, that he must not think of the signs on her part that she was beginning to care for him. And so, when he found himself a few moments later in his cheerless little room at the end of the corridor, he formed a manly resolu-

tion not to visit her studio so often in the future.

For a week he did not see her. He spent the long, weary days in the commercial districts seeking employment. One afternoon, as he was coming in earlier than was his wont, Evelyn happened to be standing in the door of her studio.

"You have not been in to tea lately," she said. She was quite pale and dark lines were under her eyes. She stepped back into the studio and he followed her. "You have not treated me as—as a friend," she finished.

"I think you can guess why I have not come," he faltered.

"What do you mean?" She asked the question slowly, and then by her failure to meet his frank gaze she showed that his meaning was already clear. He clutched the back of a chair and leaned on it.

"I realized the other day," he said, "that to continue visiting you would not be honorable. I cannot keep from betraying my feelings, and a man in my condition has no right to pay attentions to a young, unprotected girl. I am thinking of you as I would have other men think of my sister."

Evelyn drew a deep sigh. A train passing along the elevated track beneath shook the building like a far-off earthquake.

"I understand you," Evelyn said, with quivering lips. She went to the table and poured a cup of tea for him. "I understand you," she said, again; "but I shall die if you do not remain my friend."

"That I shall be always." He spoke solemnly, and accepted the cup of tea from her unsteady hands as if it had to do with an inevitable compact between them. He did not sit down in his old place at the tea-table, but stood before an unfinished picture on her easel.

"It's going to be one of your best." His voice rang out more sharply than the occasion required. "I think it will sell. I hope it will go off quickly for a good price."

They did not meet again for another

week. One evening, as he was ascending the last flight of stairs, he saw her just ahead of him. He slowed up; he did not want her to see him just then, for only an hour before he had met with a greater disappointment than usual, and feared she would read his heavy despair in his eyes. A firm that had half-promised him a trial position in its office had informed him that the situation had been given to another applicant. He hoped she would go on into her studio without seeing him, but her alert ears had recognized his step, and on the last landing she paused and waited for him. She held out her hand and he took it. To his surprise, her face was beaming and her eyes shone in the dim afternoon light from the dusky roof-window overhead.

"Guess who has been to see me this afternoon," she said, playfully.

"Your aunt," was his answer.

"Correct, sir; but you could never guess what she came to tell me."

He gave it up with a tired smile; he could think of nothing but his latest disappointment.

"You are not going to try?"

He shook his head and leaned against the wall.

"I am not good at riddles, Miss Buford."

"Then catch a fresh breath," she laughed, "for my news will simply knock you down. My aunt called with my lawyer. He had lost my address and applied to her. She piloted him to my den. He has effected a compromise with the other claimants to that Western property. In order to secure an undisputed title they have paid over an enormous amount of money. I am actually an heiress, sir."

He started and stared at her stolidly for a moment. Then he said: "I'm so glad! I congratulate you with all my heart, Miss Buford."

She winced at the formality of his words, and for a moment seemed unable to express what she wanted to say. She flushed slightly as she replied:

"My aunt seemed sorry for her

treatment of me on her last visit and begged me to forgive her. I could not refuse, so we are good friends at last. She thinks, too, that I ought to go to her house."

"Ah, yes; you will go now!" The words burst from his lips involuntarily, and he paled, as with pain.

"I promised to go to-morrow. She said an announcement of my good fortune was going to be published in the morning papers, and she hoped that I would not advertise the fact that I have been living here in such scrimpy quarters. I don't care for myself, but I presume she knows what is best."

"Yes, she knows best," Douglas repeated, mechanically.

She took a key from her pocket and unlocked her door.

"You must come to see me there real soon," she said. "I have been telling Aunt Dora about you, and she wants to make your acquaintance. You will come, won't you?"

"Thank you, Miss Buford; you are very kind."

Their eyes met. Hers had never held such a meaning look.

Someone was coming up the stairs, whistling loudly. He saw the flare of a cigar in the dark below. He did not want to subject her to criticism, so with a bow he moved away.

Evelyn entered the studio and closed the door. She groped across the room and sat down in the dark. "I wonder," she mused, "why he said that so coldly. But I don't, either, for I know. It would be like him never to come—never!"

When she had gone, to Douglas it was almost as if she had died. The next day he again took up his weary pursuit of employment, but it was with a heavier heart than ever.

A week later, as he was walking along Fifth avenue, he heard a familiar voice calling to him from behind.

"Hello, there! Hello, I say, old chap!"

Douglas turned, recognizing in the approaching young man the American friend of whom he had spoken to Eve-

lyn. He was tall, slender, and dressed in long frock-coat and top hat.

"I don't think I am mistaken," as he caught up. "Surely this is Lord Burleigh—Lord Douglas Burleigh?"

"And you are Guy Hawley!" warmly exclaimed the Englishman, as he grasped the other's hand.

"Well, I certainly had no idea of meeting you here," said the American. "I heard you were still in London. I've just got here. Come along with me. This is my club on the corner. I am dying to have a chat with you."

"I am at your disposal," said the Englishman, calmly, and together the two men entered the fashionable club-house and sat down in the smoking-room.

"For the last three months I've been trying to locate you, Burleigh," went on the American, as they lighted cigars. "Sir Hubert Downs wrote me of your father's death and—your financial embarrassment. He thought you had gone to London to form some business connection. It is on that subject that I want to talk to you."

The eyelids of the Englishman fluttered, but he kept a placid face. "I did go to London to—to see what might be open to me, but I did not sign any contract."

"I'm certainly glad you waited," said Hawley. "The truth is, I happen to have an opening for you. You know I feel deuced grateful for all your courtesy and help on the other side."

"I really did nothing," said Burleigh.

"Yes, you did, my dear fellow; your letter to the Duke of Pelmuth gave me his influence and was the direct cause of my making a cool million (between you and me) out of my lumber enterprise. But first I must know if you are bound to anyone else?"

Lord Burleigh's eyelids fluttered again. He knocked the ashes from his cigar coolly.

"I am ready to hear any proposition you are prepared to make," he answered.

"Then I want you as the secretary of a big loan company that I am or-

ganizing. The salary will be a fair one—we won't dispute about that. You need not hesitate about your not being competent. I can teach you the whole thing in two hours. And, to be frank, your title would be a big card in my favor. Will you accept?"

"When do you want me?"

"In the morning, at ten o'clock."

"Then I'll come, Hawley. I shall be glad to get to work."

"You can be of service to me in another way," went on the American, flushing for the first time. "I see I must make a clean breast of everything. The truth is, I'm in love—tied hand and foot, heart and brain, and if I don't get the matter settled I shall not make my company go. The young lady, Miss Thadwater, likes me. I know that well enough, but, unfortunately, her father is the crankiest old codger you ever saw, and, very erroneously, of course, fancies I do not fill the bill. It is not because I haven't boddle enough, for I'm as well heeled as he is, and he has three children. He has taken a notion that he can find a suitable husband for his daughter, and he doesn't understand her tastes at all. He is the biggest Anglomaniac in New York. He is too broad to want his daughter to sell herself for a title, but he is absolutely silly in his appreciation of two or three New York men who have been well received by the English nobility."

"Fancy!" ejaculated Burleigh.

"Our set is full of such blockheads," declared Hawley. "Bertha put me on to this peculiarity of his, and as she knew I'd met a good many of you fellows on the other side, she advised me to sort o' ring 'em into my conversations with the old man. I made a break in that direction, and made such a botch of it that Thadwater went home from the club where I had cornered him and said I was the biggest bore and liar out of jail."

"Bertha counseled me not to mention the subject again, but simply to invite some titled friend to visit me. I tried to work this, but I was unable to find you, and every other chap to whom I wrote had other fish to fry, so

you may depend on it I was in hot water. However, one day I met in an uptown hotel a man whom I had played cards with in Paris. He called himself Sir Charles Lubbey. I knew nothing about his antecedents or his social standing, but he was too good a thing to be missed, so I made him my guest for a month. He accepted so quickly and moved in so fast that I had to wire my man to be ready to receive him. In an off-hand way at the Stock Exchange the next day I introduced him to old Thad as one of my English friends, and as Lubbey was making as much of the friendship rôle as I was, my prospective father-in-law actually beamed on me. That very night Bertha wrote me that he had come home chock full of Sir Charles, and that I must play my baronet for all he was worth. Unfortunately, he wasn't worth a penny. He touched Thadwater for a thousand, and the next day the papers reported that the bogus nobleman had skipped, after being recognized by a lady who had known him as a draper's assistant in Oxford street. Since then there has been a frightful slump in my matrimonial chances, for Bertha simply will not elope."

Lord Burleigh laughed heartily.

"How absurd for the lady's father to care for such things!" he said.

"Well, he does, and he is too old to be made over," said Hawley, with a grim smile, "so we've got to take him as he is. Now, here's where your aid will count. As soon as it gets out that Lord Douglas Burleigh, an old friend of mine, is secretary of my new company, Thadwater will see me in a different light. My friend, Mrs. Adams Hyphen McAdams, who is in my confidence, is going to give a swell party in a few days, and you must go. When I explain what is on she may mention you in the invitations as one of the attractions. Now, don't say a word," as Burleigh began to protest. "Remember, you are wholly in my hands."

That afternoon, as Lord Burleigh ascended to his room, he saw that the janitor had left the door of Evelyn's

studio open. Seeing that he was unobserved, he went into the little room and stood over the spot where he had so often sat with her. There was an air of desolation in the rooms. His heart felt like lead.

"Nothing is as it should be," he thought. "If only she were still here, and poor, I could have come and told her of my good fortune and asked her to marry me. But she will be glad to know that my struggle is ended."

The reception given by Mrs. Adams-McAdams was one of the notable affairs of the season. She had shown too good taste to mention in her invitations that a bachelor peer was to honor the occasion with his presence, but she did whisper it to a few intimates, and on the night of the party she managed to keep him by her side that she might roll his title over her tongue in presenting him to her guests.

When old Thadwater, a short, thick-set man, as bald as an egg, approached with his daughter from the cloak-room, she said to them both, with a rare smile:

"May I present Lord Burleigh? He is a dear friend of our Mr. Hawley, and the secretary of his new company."

"Ah, indeed," exclaimed the old man, and in his eagerness to greet his first real lord he spoke while Burleigh was still bowing over his daughter's hand. "So you know our friend Hawley?"

"Oh, quite well, I assure you," replied his lordship, awkwardly. "He made, you know, quite a conquest of us on the other side."

Then Thadwater made some remark about his partiality to the better class of English people, from whom he had genealogical reasons for believing that the Thadwaters had sprung, and turned into the library, a cunning design at heart. He was not going to make any more mistakes about Hawley's noblemen. He found another individual ahead of him, a young man of Welsh extraction whose cards bore an oddity that he tried to believe was as good, at

least, as a minor title. Mr. Charles ap Charles Dyer was studying the latest edition of Burke's Peerage.

"How's he rated, Ap?" questioned Thadwater, as if the book had been a commercial directory.

"A1," answered Charles, the son of Charles. "He's O. K. He fought with William the Conqueror, and on his mother's side is a nephew of the Duke of Pelmuth. His father has just died. He is a tenth viscount, and a lot more. Hawley knows him; Hawley knows the whole shooting-match over there."

Thadwater sauntered back into the drawing-room. He had begun to think there was no use trying to keep Hawley and his daughter apart. Seeing the couple in close conversation across the room, he went to them. They smiled at him pacifically. Thadwater did not do things by halves.

"Fine chap, this Burleigh," he remarked, patronizingly, to Hawley. "He'll make you a good man. We'd like to see more of him, eh, Berth?"

"Mr. Hawley has promised to bring him to dine to-morrow," smiled the young lady. "Lord Burleigh is going to tell us about his tiger shooting."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Adams-McAdams was trailing her peer through the various rooms. They had just reached the door leading into the long picture gallery when two ladies came up from behind.

"I have been chasing you for ten minutes, my dear Mrs. McAdams," cried the elder lady. "We are behind time, but we were detained after dinner with some friends. This is my niece, Miss Buford, of Virginia."

During this greeting Evelyn and Lord Burleigh stood staring at each other in mutual astonishment. Evelyn's features had grown white, and when she was introduced to Lord Burleigh, and her old acquaintance bowed low, she stood erect, with a sneer on her face.

"I'm pleased to meet *Lord* Burleigh," she said, distantly.

Then Mrs. McAdams piloted Mrs.

Buford into another room, and the lovers were alone together. Burleigh looked red and stupid, and could think of nothing to say.

"Perhaps Mr. Douglas will be good enough to explain," Evelyn found her voice presently. "I once believed you to be the very soul of honor, and yet, now—"

She broke off, unable to master her indignation. He knew something was demanded of him, and yet he could not think what it was. He led her into the deserted picture gallery. But Evelyn caught his arm and turned him to her with a sort of frantic curiosity to know the worst of his infamy.

"I was never so—shocked—so humiliated in my life," she declared. "When my aunt heard that the guest of honor was an English lord, she dragged me forward, and now I find it only you—you. Oh, to think you could dare to come here under such circumstances!"

"You really must let me explain," said the viscount, as he tried to steady his gaze on a Rembrandt on the wall. "You remember I told you of an American friend, a Mr. Hawley?"

"I do," answered Evelyn, coldly.

"Well, he is here to-night. He has given me a fine position in an enterprise of his. I was averse to going into society, but he explained that it would be a sort of—social advantage to him if I would come here with him—"

"And be introduced as an English lord!" Evelyn exclaimed, scornfully. "You consented to that?"

"Yes, of course." Burleigh stared at her as if mystified. "I really did not know that your people were so much opposed to the use of titles. I thought Hawley knew what was the proper thing, so—so I let him have his way."

Evelyn drew herself up to her full height. For a moment it looked as if she were going to turn her back on him, but a wave of tender recollections seemed to pass over her, and she gazed at him almost pleadingly.

"And you were my ideal!" she said,

fiercely. "I am not ashamed to tell you something, Mr. Douglas, for it took place before I knew you for what you are. I loved you with the only love I ever gave a man—not you, you understand, but the ideal I had of you. In the future, those old days over our little tea-table shall be recalled only with a shudder."

Her eyes filled. She gazed at him as if praying him to revoke the act that had thrust them asunder. Burleigh's eyes were flashing back and forth between her face and the Rembrandt. He thought slowly. He wondered what she was so angry about.

"Miss Buford, really, I cannot understand what harm I have done. Surely—"

"Do you think we Americans are fools?" she broke in, hotly. "Do you think that Yankee Hawley can palm you off as a nobleman? You'll be exposed in all the papers, and it will bring everybody into ridicule that ever treated you hospitably. I thought you were at least a gentleman."

A light broke in on his understanding.

"Surely," he gasped, "you don't think I am not—not Burleigh?"

"You told me your name was Douglas."

"That is my given name. I am Viscount Burleigh. Perhaps I ought to have spoken to you of my—my rank at home, but I couldn't get to it, somehow. I really felt ashamed to own it, when I was doing so little to justify my claim to anything."

"You mean that you—you are really a lord?" said the girl.

He nodded, and flushed. The orchestra in the ballroom began to play for the cotillon. For a moment she gazed into his eyes so steadily that she saw her image in his pupils.

"I have been a silly goose," she

said, taking a deep breath. "I ought to have known you were a lord, or a duke, or something different from other men."

Burleigh ran his big fingers through his hair.

"After your admission in regard to your feelings just now," he said, awkwardly, "I feel that I ought to declare myself. I know you must feel—you must have felt all along—that I loved you."

"I hoped so, Mr. Doug—Lord Bur— Oh, I don't know what to call you!"

"I love you as much as it is possible for a man to love a woman," he ran on, his great brow wrinkled as if what he was saying were only a meagre part of a great force pent up in him. "And when I was hunting for work, it was with the hope that I might be able to ask you to marry me. But I failed, and you got rich and—"

"You would not let a thing like that stand between a love like ours was—like ours is?"

"I would feel that it would not be quite right," he answered.

"As your wife I'd have a title, wouldn't I?" There was a merry twinkle in her eyes.

"You'd be Lady Burleigh." He shrugged his shoulders and grew red again. "But you needn't be called that unless you wish."

"Oh, I'd like it well enough. Lady Burleigh!—that would sound all right. And just to think we loved each other truly, down deep in our hearts, when we didn't have enough to eat, nor money to pay the rent! I think we ought to get married. Really, I do."

A moment later Hawley passed with Miss Thadwater on his arm. He winked at his friend, but Lord Burleigh's face remained steadily aglow. He was too happy to wink, to speak, almost too happy to think.



MY LAUNCH AND I

WHAT glorious times we have together,
My Launch and I in the Summer weather!
My trim little launch, with its sturdy sides,
And its strong heart beating away as it glides
Out of the harbor and out of the Bay,
Wherever our fancy may lead us away;
Rollicking over the salt-sea track,
Hurrying seaward and hurrying back.

My boat has never a braggart sail—
To boast in the breeze, in the calm to quail;
No tyrant boom deals a sudden blow,
Saying, “You are my lackey; bend low, bend low!”
No mast struts over a windless sea
To show how powerless pride may be;
But sure and steady, and true and stanch,
It bounds o'er the billows, my little Launch.

Ready and willing, and quick to feel
The lightest touch of my hand on the wheel,
It laughs in the teeth of a driving gale
Or skims by the cat-boat's drooping sail,
Its head held high when the Sound is still,
Then dipping its prow like a water-bird's bill
Down under the waves of a rolling sea—
Oh, my gay little Launch is the boat for me!

Ofttimes, when the great Sound seethes and swirls,
I carry a cargo of laughing girls;
Bare-armed, bare-limbed, and with hanging hair,
They are bold as mermaids, and twice as fair.
They swarm from the cabin, they perch on the prow
When the tenth wave batters them, breast and brow;
They bloom the brighter, as sea-flowers do,
While their sweet, shrill merriment bursts anew.

And oft when the sunset dyes the Bay
O'er a mirror-like surface we glide away,
My Launch and I, to follow the breeze
That has jilted the shore for the deeper seas.
When the full moon flirts with the perigee tide
On a track of silver away we glide.
Oh, glorious times we have together,
My Launch and I, in the Summer weather!

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

IN LILAC TIME

IT was like this: They were two ghosts, he and she, and they always came back when the lilacs were in bloom to visit the house where they had first met at a dance, ever so many years ago.

Now they sat in the twilight in the same old corner of the stairway where it turned under the great window. The octagon panes swung open so that the soft, lilac-scented air came drifting in, reminding them of the Summertime of their happy youth. Trembling shadows stole down the steps past the high, old-fashioned clock. Below was the great chimney-piece, around which were blue bowls filled with the blossoms purple and white from which the house took its name—“The Lilacs.”

It was the scene of long ago repeated, with just this difference: Through the doorway there was a glimpse of the library beyond, where a girl with fluffy gold hair tied with a blue ribbon sat in a big chair. Her high-heeled red slippers glanced beneath her white frock, and she was looking wistfully at a young man who played the banjo, softly singing.

“Seems when I look in your eyes
My heart will break with joy and glad
surprise.
If I could only dare
To read my answer there—”

Sometimes the girl joined in the song, but they kept their voices low so that a lady in a lace cap, who sat at the other side of the room, dozing gently, should not waken.

The Girl ghost looked up at her lover. He was like an old portrait in his high white stock and pink coat.

“Sweetheart,” he said, “how much has happened in the world since we left it, you and I!”

“Because neither could live without the other, and we had promised—do you remember, as we sat here together, just such a twilight as this, with the lilacs all in bloom?”

“Aye, well I remember, dear—when I kissed you first—”

The Girl ghost blushed and looked up shyly into her lover’s eyes.

“Do you remember?” he asked.

She leaned her cheek softly against his shoulder.

“You know I love you so;
Oh, honey, don’t say no—”

came the music and the young voices from the library.

“We’ve been such happy ghosts,” said the Girl, “and we have learned so much that they know nothing of on earth! We hear and see; we know and think; we speak—”

“Yes, all but feel!” he said. “I’d give up all the glory of our ghostdom to kiss you once again, with the lilacs all around us.”

“It is possible,” she said, with eagerness. “Let us put our souls in those two stupid young people. They will never know. Give me your hand.”

“You remember when I met you in the Springtime,
My lady Lu, so fond and true—”

sang the two unconscious ones below.

“Chaperon’s asleep,” whispered the girl with the fluffy hair. “Let us go out into the hall, or we shall waken her.”

The boy laid the banjo down, and it strummed sharply. Both listened anxiously for a moment, but the lady in the chair dozed on. They walked softly out on tip-toe, her hand in his.

The girl drew in a deep breath of the blossom-laden air in the hall. The clock ticked solemnly; it was all that disturbed the silence.

“The lilacs are so beautiful tonight!” said the girl, wistfully. She took a white spray and fastened it in his coat. Their faces leaned together in the twilight.

“S-h-h!” he whispered; “you’ll waken Chappy.”

“Oh, ple-e-ease!” she murmured.

KATE MASTERSON.

OLD-FASHIONED WASHINGTON

By K. W.

THE Washington of former times, not the legendary "befo' de wah," but when Grant and Hayes reigned over us, was above all a "do as you please" place, always supposing that you were one of the small number who made society. We had no sets in those happy times; everyone knew everyone, and all gatherings were marked by the ease of a congenial family party on its own premises, though there was none of that narrowing general relationship that used to prevail in Boston, when everyone who was not your own cousin was the cousin of the person to whom you were talking.

Washington was a struggling, easy-going sort of village in those days, the wide streets not yet imprisoned in straight rows of trees and reduced to an asphalted level. Our trees grew on or off the sidewalks, the unevenly laid bricks of which would give under the feet in the damp Spring weather, thus being a constant delight to children, who loved to push them up and down.

The houses were of all shapes and sizes, and whether you lived in a big or a little one did not affect your position in the least; only the people in big houses gave balls, and the others merely went to them.

The whole town looked poorer than now, and there were more funny little frame cottages occupied by negro squatters, such as still survive on Sixteenth street, the colored Fifth avenue.

There used to be a story of two English attachés, who, arriving at the old Baltimore & Ohio station, then in the most God-forsaken neighborhood of

shanties, sticking up out of the muddy avenues that sprawled away in all directions, declared that this could not be the capital of the United States, and refused to get out of the train.

We had not as many amusements then, but I think that we were more amused, and we had one thing that lent its flavor to everything else—intimacy; and, as a consequence of knowing each other so well, there was a great deal of love-making. A girl was badly off who had not at least two entanglements on her hands, and we played out such problems with the concentrated zest that is now scattered on golf and kindred sports. Believe me, ladies, there is no outdoor sport—or indoor, for that matter—equal to the study of your fellow-man; it develops your mind better than any Browning class. There was much healthful exercise in it incidentally, too, for "going to walk" was a recognized phase of these affairs, and we used to get over many miles of the leafy streets, and even far out into the lovely hilly country at Kalorama and among the woods about Rock Creek, where every stone had a sentimental association. Now, the whole neighborhood is cut and scarred by trolley lines, but then it was a solitude, disturbed only by an occasional picnic at Wormley's Farm or Pierce's Mill.

An annual fête of importance was the expedition to Great Falls. We went by the Potomac Canal on a steam canal-boat of one mule-power. It was an all-day excursion, always called "Major Joy's picnic," after the gentleman who promoted it, and in whose name guests were invited, but whose part in the entertainment was limited

to deciding what delicacies other people should take, while he invariably brought a ham. When we came to a lock we landed and walked along the bank, with an admirer, of course; or we sat on the deck of our little boat, looking at the canal winding before us among the flowering bushes, and down the steep hillside to the beautiful swift river below.

Once at the Falls, we scrambled and grouped ourselves upon picturesque rocks, ate the ham, and returned in the twilight through the tender greens and sweet Spring odors, till the upheld warning finger of the Monument showed us that we were at home.

Many love affairs and some marriages came out of such expeditions, but as a rule we were not playing for "keeps." One may abandon one's self to one's impulses in a place where people are always moving on. The army and navy men, the politicians, the diplomats—none stays, as a rule, more than four years, but this was an ample margin, particularly for the foreigners, who are quicker to take fire than our own countrymen. They are also more dramatic. I remember one ardent Russian who used to fall on his knees before the lady of his choice and offer himself to her in a loud voice, regardless of listeners. In the evening he would fill the space between her parlor windows and the shutters with flowers, and sprinkle roses up and down the steps that she might tread upon them. He was a brilliant pianist, and when he found roses and offers of marriage insufficient to relieve his feelings, he would draw his piano close to the window, so that he himself was half outside, and play the most impassioned of Chopin's melodies, till not only she, but all the other neighbors, were ready to elope on the spot. All our relations were not, however, of this tense description. The Englishmen, in particular, were very often friends, and no more—the jolliest kind of friends, full of that delightful boyishness that they appear never to lose.

We used to play the most absurd

games, make nonsense verses, act charades—sometimes with a supreme indifference to public opinion—in the open air. One of the Britishers made a little play out of a popular "coon" song of those days:

I went to the hen-house on my knees,
I thought I heard a chicken sneeze.
Oh, Miss Lou, good-bye, John!
Oh, I'se gwine to leave you,
With a good-bye, 'Liza Jane!

The author himself sustained the exacting rôle of the chicken sneezing; "Good-bye, John," was painstakingly rendered by a colleague who has since distinguished himself on the diplomatic stage; while I remember to have been much applauded as "Miss Lou," a character that gave the fullest scope to one's fancy.

Our foreign friends were sometimes amusing in spite of themselves. One of them—a minister plenipotentiary—was very superstitious, and believed firmly in putting his best and right foot foremost. He would never step up or down, or into a door, with his left foot first, and if he found, on coming to the curbstone or car track, that his feet were wrong, he would change them with a little hop, or even run backward and start afresh. Sometimes this would happen on the threshold of a drawing-room, where his hostess—perhaps the dignified wife of the Secretary of State—would be left with her welcoming hand outstretched, while his excellency struggled with his luck and his legs. The representative of another great power, though a cultivated and even captivating person, had an eighteenth-century distrust of soap and water. He had been in this country twenty years, and it was said of him that he had but two shirts—one he had worn over and one he was keeping to wear back.

We had also an appreciative first secretary, who always helped himself to the whole of a dish he fancied—all the asparagus and strawberries in February, or the entire bowl of ter-rapin. Fortunately, he never dined twice where the cooking was not to his liking, so one had a line of defense.

The last nights of a session were very exciting. A party of us would go down to the Capitol to hear the concluding debates on some hard-fought measure; and in our progress through the long, vaulted corridors and halls between Senate and House we would join to our number many political friends in both camps. One's friends in the Capitol are of the enemy's household, for with whom can you pair off but an opponent? Some obliging member would provide supper in his committee-room, with a long, hospitable table, where the seats were constantly filled and emptied according to the demands of the debate. Champagne has a tendency to give one optimistic views, even on the tariff or silver question, so we would return to the galleries after supper in a mood to think well of all parties, and finally stroll out on the terraces, the soft dark mass of the city dotted with lights lying below us and all around the Capitol gardens, full of blossoming shrubs and lawns, just visible by starlight.

The Joint High Commission that met to decide the Alabama question caused one of the gayest Spring seasons ever known in Washington. The Commissioners were attended by numerous secretaries, legal advisers and other semi-diplomatic persons, whom we called "Low Joints," to distinguish them from their higher colleagues. High and Low Joints alike were filled with the friendliest spirit of interest toward all the world, and on our part each Washingtonian appeared to feel that an amicable settlement of the Alabama difficulty would be reached best through his, or particularly her, efforts.

We dined them, and danced them, and walked them, and talked them, till elderly Englishmen of rank ran about after girls of eighteen with as much zest as their youngest secretary. At some impromptu theatricals the Highest Commissioner played the young lover with such spirit that he chased his Phyllis off the hastily built stage into a yawning bay window, stopping the play and spraining the

prettiest ankle in Washington. This mishap, however, worked for good, for the young lady held court during three weeks, with the injured but charming foot on a cushion and his lordship in constant attendance. In short, is not the triumph of American diplomacy on the Alabama question in all the histories? And who shall say where the credit is due?

Visiting grandes, like the Emperor of Brazil or a Russian grand duke, were generally taken to Mt. Vernon, when the usual programme of *al fresco* fun and flirtation was varied by the presence of royalty, and occasionally, when there was some military dignitary to entertain, we would go in a special train to Annapolis, and there make the rounds of all the drills and parades, escorted by a glittering line of gold lace and epaulettes. Once we wound up with a "hop," where an adventurous little middy bravely chose the stoutest of the ladies, so fat that one could not tell which side of her to ask to dance, and triumphantly waltzed with her, to the delight of all.

When the regular season was over, and Congress adjourned, there was still a little coterie left, which passed its time pleasantly enough.

"Doorstepping" set in with the warm weather. In the leafy, empty streets there was nothing disgracefully public in receiving your friends outside, where we brought out cushions and chairs for the more luxurious. A constant visitor and gallant officer always asked for leave to sit on the spot where the ice was left in the morning; another, as a matter of course, always climbed up the nearest lamp-post and turned down the gas; then we were comfortable, and no doubt pleasant to look at under the half-light, with the girls in fresh, thin dresses; pleasant, too, was the subdued tinkle—not of guitars—but of ice in tumblers, and the smell of the roses and syringas that abounded in all the old-fashioned gardens.

We deeply resented the grading, leveling and planting that went on under Boss Shepard's rule, when our pretty, shabby village was made over

into the trim city of to-day; and, to be sure, there was a time of chaos, when streets were dug down and filled up, and everything done and undone until the whole town was a gaping trench, and the experiments in the wood and other paving seemed meant to lame the whole community. Men wandered out at night and fell into some "improvement," and were never seen again! The huge water pipes lay for months along the streets, high and dry, and it is said that one of them once formed a refuge for a persecuted pair. The lady's father, a stern general, forbade her to see her sweet-

heart, and took her shoes away by way of precaution; she, however, easily got out of the window of the low, rambling house, and, not being able to walk far, the pair crept into the big pipe and there, secure and sheltered equally from the sun and prying eyes, arranged another international alliance.

It was all just like a country town; yes, but the people were different. If the play is good, the scenery and decorations may be as simple as possible; one may merely write up on the wings, "The Action Takes Place in Verona"—or in Washington.



A TOAST

HERE'S to those that love us—
If we only cared!
And to those that *we'd* love—
If we only dared!

ANNA E. GUMAER.



AN INHERITED PASSION

"MISS PUTTES asserts that golf has been the hereditary game of her family."
"Yes; I understand her great-grandfather fought at Bunker Hill!"



A MATTER OF CAPACITY

VAN GILT-BILT—I have just had my yacht remodeled.
BILLYBOY—Why, I didn't know she needed it.

VAN GILT-BILT—Oh, yes. I can stow away twice as much liquor in her now as I could before.

THE PASSING OF A PRIVATE BILL

By Guy Somerville

NOW Billy Durfee was a fatuous man, and a Stoic, and he held not only his life but his soul even in the hollow of his hand; and so it came to pass that he became engaged unto a Girl; and this was in the budding, fruitful Spring.

Marjorie Lightfoot had friends who said she could have Done Better, and yet other friends, who thought she was doing well to win Billy; and we, who were Billy's friends, thought little about these matters, except that Billy was a gastronome in the highest, and that, in due course, it would be necessary for him to give his Last Supper, and tell the story of his life. Also, we called him, affectionately, Her Private Bill, or, An Act for the Relief of Miss Lightfoot.

And the Fall came, and the Winter, and yet another Spring, and the matter languished apace, so that society murmured. But at last Billy rose, and made him a new frock-coat and began to wear violets therein, so that all mankind might know that the end was near. For this, in the Language of Flowers, is ever the meaning of violets.

The Last Supper was at the Arlington, and it was Billy's whim not to begin till three; for so one may be in everybody's mouth on the morrow, and painted as a reckless, ruthless rake in the *Washington Star*, which designation is fitting, on the eve of marriage. Across the mighty table ran diagonally a crimson drapery, rich with the wealth of Ormus or of Ind; and by each place a little silver pot with real vermillion paint, symbolic of the purpose for which we were gathered there. The only light came from

tall candles that Billy said were of blessed wax and had been stolen by Jenkins, his man, from a Romish church not far away on the Virginia side. But we knew that Billy lied. The Assembly had been the night before, and we had all seen those candles.

Across the way, at the Secretary of the Interior's, the cuckoo clock struck five. It is a long-distance clock and an obtrusive, and we all recognized its chime. We had heard it, each of us, what times we had sat up late with the Secretary's daughter. Billy pushed back his chair.

"Smoke up," said Billy, cheerfully. "There are some *Nuevo Mundos* and a few *La Rosa de Dagos* that I smuggled through myself. You may not have known it, fellows, but I was the last man up San Juan Hill. That is," he reflectively added, "unless someone has been up since."

"Now, Billy," said Nesbitt, querulously—Nesbitt is always querulous when he drinks white wine—"don't try to tell the story of the Cuban War—at least, not in the presence of Smythe. Smythe knows more about it than any of us fellows. He was all through it—in New York. And he knows the editor of the *Wormal*."

Foster twisted in his chair.

"Don't be too sure that Smythe knows *anything*," he said. "He doesn't know why Mrs. Charles Perkins turned him down after he'd been engaged to her for a whole year. And if I had been in his place, it is a subject the investigation of which would have had a peculiar fascination for me."

"Is it the Mrs. Charles Perkins

who made mutascopes in Chicago, and was otherwise interested in illusions?" I queried.

"Yes," chorused several. "She did make mutascopes—or, at least, Charles did, when he was alive. *And* there were other illusions—various others—on both sides."

"But she won out," said Billy, reflectively; "because Charles died."

"She is a sylph, a Madonna and a Queen of Sheba all in one," said Wallace, enthusiastically. "It's a singularly unlucky thing for Smythe, and I am devilish sorry he missed it. Incidentally, there were millions in the case."

"It isn't the case," said Smythe, moodily, "although I did keep a watch on her. I was a bit of a fool, and I was really interested in the face and hands."

"I have heard they were very minute," said Wallace. "But, like the wren's egg, they were indisputably hers."

"They came near being our hands," said Smythe, reflectively. "But I was not as surprised when she turned me down as you seem to think, though it drove me to brandy and soda for three weeks. I could have used that incidental ten millions *so conveniently*," he added, with evident regret.

"Not to speak of the face and hands," said Nesbitt. "Why weren't you surprised?"

Smythe chewed, in an embarrassed way, the end of his cigar.

"Well," said he, "engaged women are all more or less like *x*, the unknown quantity: $1+1=x$; it is the equation of matrimony. In another way it is also the equation of betrothal. I could tell stories about flirtations I've had with girls engaged to other fellows that would make your flesh creep; and I'm not a flirtatious man, as you all know."

"Yes," I said, "as we all know. Give him a fresh one."

Billy tilted back his chair. "Go on," said Billy. "It's a subject of remarkable interest. Show me what I have to expect."

"Oh, I dare say you're all right,"

said Smythe. "She's a Baltimore girl—isn't she?—I always forget her name. And Baltimore girls are frightfully reliable. There is so little to tempt girls in Baltimore. Besides, you've had her a long time—haven't you?—and doubtless she is perfectly trained. But there was a girl I met in New York last week who was an untamed animal, and she was Somebody's Fiancée, too. I am happy to say I don't know whose. I am still happier that he doesn't know me."

"What did she do?" said Wallace, in accents of distrust. "Did she try to kiss you in a public place? And, if so, why?"

"I feel sure," said Nesbitt, gravely, "that that is the *only* kind of a place she would have—"

"Oh, I say," said Smythe, impatiently, "if you want to hear, I'll tell you, with a discreet omission of names, places and dates. It isn't very much, after all. I met her at a dance at the Waldorf, and we had a few wild two-steps together. She said she was engaged to a chap who wasn't there, and I said it was lucky he wasn't. She said she was chaperoned by an awful old cat who didn't let her so much as wink at the statues (fancy!—in the Waldorf!), and I mustn't come to the house if I valued my *peau-de-chien*; but if I wanted to flirt, at any time, to call up 1219 River, and we could arrange the *mise-en-scène* together. 'But,' she said, 'you're like all men. I know you never will.'"

"And, of course," said Billy Durfee, "you never did."

"Well—hardly ever," said Smythe, smiling. "She was a beautiful girl—and her cheeks I simply can't do justice to."

There ran a ripple of ribald laughter round the board.

"I wonder how long he tried?" said Foster, merrily; and Nesbitt added, "At any one time."

"Was she as beautiful," said Billy, darkly, "as Mrs. Charles Perkins?"

A sinister look overclouded the face of Smythe.

"I say, fellows," he said, "don't you think there's been enough ragging

about Mrs. Perkins? There's a limit, you know, and—I neglected to mention it before—I loved her. I really did, you know."

Billy Durfee stood up and stretched out his hand.

"Smythe, old chap," said he, "I beg your pardon. I'll never do it again."

"Oh, it's all right, Billy," said Smythe, mollified. "Has somebody a nut? I need a drink, but I'm not thirsty."

Foster passed a whole symphony of nuts, intensely salted. Nesbitt threw himself into the middle of things. "I will now tell a story," said Nesbitt, "about how an engaged girl flirted with me."

I shuddered.

"See now the force of example," I said to Smythe. "Did you mean to do this harmful thing? And I can see that Wallace has a similar story ready on his tongue."

Billy Durfee squirmed unconsciously. "I say, fellows," he said, "you all make me feel damned comfortable. See which of you can write the prettiest epitaph for me. I'll bet on Sibley; he's been in the Tombs."

"Only on professional visits," I protested. It wasn't a nice thing for Billy to say.

Then Nesbitt told his story, which it is not well to print, for he is an unconventional man, is Nesbitt, when he is full-blown with wine. And Wallace told his story, and Foster told one; and each tended to show that girls respected not their plighted troth, and were quite unreliable, before, during and after. And I told how I had known a maid who had been plighted, at one and the same time, to three several men, among whom the nights of the week were divided, Sunday being observed as a holiday. And then Billy Durfee rose and took the big cut-glass centrepiece that held his floral tributes and smashed it reflectively upon the inlaid floor. It made a glorious mess, and Billy loved it, for he was deadly drunk, as, I fear, were all my companions upon that night of shame. And the clock of the Secretary of the Interior painfully struck six.

"I wish," said Billy, profanely, "that you would all go home. I can't, and somebody ought to."

We all shook hands with Billy, and blessed him, in so far as in us lay. But he tapped me on the sleeve, and I stayed after the others went. I think that was the reason that I stayed, though Billy has since denied that he ever— But that is immaterial.

Then he got up and dragged himself over to the door and shut and locked it on the inner side and leaned against it with his whole great weight, and he is a mighty man.

"Sibley," said Billy Durfee, "I really don't feel quite fit."

"I shouldn't have believed it," I answered. "I never trust appearances—never. Now, I dare say, in my own case, I look like a man who has been drinking."

"I wish you'd post this as you go out," said Billy Durfee. "Don't forget it—it's rather important. There was an engagement I had for Monday, and I find I shall have to break it." And he tossed me a rudely scrawled note.

I stared at him.

"For Monday, in good sooth!" I said, laughing. "Why, it's your wedding-day. If you've other engagements for Monday it's nearly time you broke them."

Billy stood up suddenly very straight.

"I haven't but one other engagement in the world," he said, quietly, "and this doesn't affect that one. When you've sent that note for me I will not have any engagement at all for Monday. It's rather rocky—but it's to Miss Lightfoot—and it's good-bye."

I sat, perfectly rigid, in my chair.

"I didn't care to tell the fellows, just yet," said Billy. "Only Marjorie—I shall always think of her as Marjorie—has been in New York visiting the Burfords for over three weeks. And I had occasion to call her up yesterday from the Shoreham on the long-distance 'phone."

"Well?" said I.

He walked unsteadily over to the window and looked out. Before him

there danced, like little devils' eyes, the red and green lights of the Arlington drug store, opposite.

"Nothing," said Billy Durfee. "Only—her number was 1219 River. And oh, Sibley, make my excuses to Madame Wassini if you go to that thing of hers to-morrow. I am going to have Jenkins get a few things together in a hurry, and I believe I shall go away for a while on the *Kaiser Wilhelm*."

II

THREE months later, Foster and I sat, in particularly white flannels, on the generous piazza of the Hotel Belle Vue, at Monte Carlo. Around the curve of the shore that separates Monte Carlo from Monaco, Foster's blue-nosed, degenerate-looking yacht was riding; and the ladies were, in the natural course of things, in the Casino. In front of and below us was the sea; the tracks of the Paris, Lyons and la Méditerranée were on the hither side, with the absurdly prim, cut-and-dried, nicely managed look that makes all European railways appear, somehow, like toys. I have always thought that they sponge off the rails in the mornings, at the same time that they adjust their ties.

Foster stretched drowsily and turned to look up the hill, where, a few rods away, the fluttering folds of a red, white and blue flag marked the inexorable line of political geography, according to which terminated there the little principality and began the sunny land of France. Above, on the beetling cliffs (although, of course, they do not really beetle), heavy guns were mounted—so heavy that in case of need they could belch forth flame over the nominally neutral Monaco and render untenable the macaroni factories of San Remo and Ventimiglia. For the soft, effeminate Italian Riviera was only a dozen or so kilometers away.

"It was a jolly good trip," said Foster. "I hope the rest of you enjoyed it as much as I. As for Anding, he made the mistake of his life

in stopping off at Tangier, and I particularly know that he wanted to go on with us to Athens. I wonder why he stopped?"

"He knew a girl at Tangier," I suggested, mildly.

"Doubtless," said Foster. "From the consul's brief remarks, that night he dined on board, I gathered that he had known several. He was a discreet man, the consul, and a gentle man, but he was hardly used to our particular Yquem-sur-Saluces. I am sorry for the consul if he and Anding meet on shore—say at the English—and Anding sees him first."

"It was a pretty story, that about the purple hour," I observed, reflectively. "Lady Bertha sat and took it all in, especially when it came to the part about the changeable silk underskirt. Do houris really wear silk underskirts, and can they be changed? Lady Bertha said— What are you staring at?"

"I say, Sibley," said Foster, and his tone was somewhat constrained, "who would have thought we should have met those people? That's Smythe and his wife—Billy Durfee's old girl—Marjorie Lightfoot that was. Let's go over."

We went over and shook hands with Mr. and Mrs. Smythe, who looked duly hymeneal. They explained, at some length, why they were there in that month, and then we explained why we were there, and that they were keeping the hotel open just for us, and many similar things. Also, that Lady Bertha and Lady Mary had lost heavily the night before, and had therefore repaired to the Casino promptly at eleven that morning, when it opened, for the avowed purpose of getting it all back, with damages for its detention, and costs.

"That was very early for Lady Bertha and Lady Mary," said Mrs. Smythe, with a little sigh. "They must have gone without the first breakfast."

"Oh," said Foster, "they breakfast a l'Américaine all the time. Beef-steak and fried potatoes and things. And grape fruit, *with or without*,"

"I suppose dear Lady Bertha is very unapproachable when she loses," said Mrs. Smythe, sweetly. (Smythe is not a baronet, though I think he has hopes.)

"Never," I protested with warmth. "She is never unapproachable—except, perhaps, when she is in the olive brocade that she wore at the Andings' pink tea, and then only for physical reasons. She seems rather in a good humor when she loses, and can drink ever so much more grape fruit."

"Really?" said Mrs. Smythe. "But then some women are wonderful, don't you think, when it comes to hiding disappointment?"

I suppressed a struggling smile.

"Yes," I said, vaguely.

Mrs. Smythe flushed.

"I broke it off myself," said she, irrelevantly.

I bowed. "I only said 'yes,'" I pleaded.

"You seemed to be in doubt," she said.

"I remember the circumstances very well," I said, reassuringly.

Smythe got up and ran his fingers through his hair, and his eyes dilated madly.

"For the greater glory of God," said Smythe, "will you look at Billy Durfee coming up the walk? Talk about meeting other Americans in the Louvre! What is he doing here?"

Billy came up to us like a tame animal, with a somewhat sheepish smile. No one will ever accuse Billy of being Spring lamb. He shook hands all around and subsided into a wicker chair. He had spent the night in Nice, and looked singularly effete.

Foster burst into a jolly laugh that it was good to hear.

"This is the best thing that has happened since we left New York," he said. "Or rather," he added, truthfully, "since it was discovered that Oliver had *not*, as was at first reported, forgotten to lay in any oysters."

"Under the circumstances," I ventured to remark, "I feel that I may be pardoned for addressing Mrs. Smythe as the presiding lady of this

meeting, and demanding what she will have in hers."

Mrs. Smythe thought she would have a lemonade, American style.

"It would be easier to obtain a pyramid or an obelisk or a slice of cold unicorn in the hostelry," I suggested. "Still, we can try. Alphonse! A lemonade for the lady; a lemon squash, that is. Perfectly, as you say. And a hot Medford rum for the gentleman who has just come, and Scotch for the rest of us. The rum must be *very* hot, Alphonse."

"I am more than delighted to observe," said Foster, deliberately, "that, in spite of the fact that Smythe has cut him out, our friend Durfee looks fat."

"Oh," said Billy, with composure, "it was naturally something of a blow. But by this time I am able to sit up and take a little nourishment. And Smythe is a better man." He bowed, good-naturedly, to Smythe's wife.

Smythe nervously threw away his cigar.

"Thank you, old chap," said Smythe. "If I only thought that you really didn't mind—" and he glanced, half-apologetically, at his wife.

"I know Mr. Durfee doesn't mind," said she, quietly.

Billy abstractedly removed a cigarette from my case, which lay on the wicker table, and lit it.

"Of course, it was a great blow," said Billy. "Any fellow would feel that. But I've tried to be sensible about it, and not mope. Perhaps, after all, you two are better suited. The other way might have been a mistake. Besides which," he said, as a sort of afterthought, "I am in love again."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Smythe.

"Then it's all right," said Smythe, much relieved. "I was ashamed of it before, but now I'm free to tell you. That was a mistake of yours that night at the supper, and you never gave me any chance to correct it. It was *all* a mistake from beginning to end."

Foster and I began to feel *de trop*.

"What do you mean?" said Billy

Durfee, slowly. "About the number? Wasn't it 1219 River?"

Mrs. Smythe's lip curled with high disdain.

"Yes," said she. "It *was* 1219 River, Billy. But I was not the girl."

This was becoming dramatic.

"You see," said Smythe, a little lamely, "there was another girl—Grace Burford."

"Oh," said Billy, "there was Grace Burford. Of course."

"Whom I was visiting," said Mrs. Smythe. "And she was also engaged. And Grace is a frightful flirt—everyone says so."

"Precisely so," said Billy Durfee.

Foster twitched nervously.

"I say, you people," said he, "why don't we all go down to the Casino? If we stay here with Sibley we'll only drink all afternoon, and we'll feel very unfit. And we'll get to look like Sibley."

But Smythe leaned forward anxiously, looking at Billy Durfee.

"I say, old chap, you don't mind, do you—not now?" said Smythe; and he really meant it.

"No," said Billy, slowly. "I think possibly it is all for the best," and, quite absent-mindedly, he took another cigarette.

"I was sure you'd feel that way," said Smythe. "And you know it wasn't anybody's fault—it wasn't, really."

"It's the oddest thing I ever heard," said Foster.

Here Alphonse brought the nectar, with cups and goodly glasses and much extra lemon.

"While we're on the subject of old affairs," said Mrs. Smythe, tentatively (she is almost as much of a Stoic as Billy)—"what was your former flame, Mrs. Charles Perkins, doing in Nice, gentle husband? Do you remember we saw her at the *Anglais*? How she has gained!"

"People say," said Foster, thoughtfully, "that she has gained four, or maybe five, millions."

"That is all men think of, nowadays—money," sighed Mrs. Smythe.

"Did you see Mrs. Perkins when

you were in Nice?" I asked of Billy, "or don't you know her?"

Billy reluctantly shied the second cigarette in the direction of the placid Mediterranean.

"Sometimes I think yes, sometimes no," he said, a little sheepishly. "I suppose, of course, you mean my wife. My wife *was* Mrs. Charles Perkins. I've just left her in Nice."

A dreadful pause.

"Perhaps you haven't any of you heard," pursued Billy. "You know she's been traveling in the Far East, and so have I. We were married in Singapore a month ago, and a good many people don't know."

"I fancy that is likely," said I.

"It is quite a surprise," said Mrs. Smythe. "It must have been a long engagement."

"Awfully short," said Billy, and his tone was very matter-of-fact. "Let's see. When was that fatal supper of mine at the *Arlington*, where you fellows were all so cheerful? I remember. I cried for a week at Foster's story. Wasn't it in April?"

"The third," said I.

"I thought," said Billy, "that it was about the third."

"And the engagement?" said Smythe; and he gripped the arms of his chair.

"I'm not sure," said Billy. "But I think she must have said 'yes' about the end of March. Possibly the end of February; but I'm almost sure it was March. Please ask him in his own lingo if he has a *Henry Clay* about the premises; I never can talk to these Provençals."

Smythe leaned back unsteadily.

"Bring some *cigares de Havane*," he said, slowly, to Alphonse—"some *Henri Clay*. Also bring, for me, some cigarettes. And—and a new hot Medford rum, with plenty of nutmeg."

"She's a good-looking woman," said Foster, cautiously. "A good-looking woman—with fourteen millions. Billy, you did well!" Billy was looking at Smythe with mild inquiry in his eye.

"I say, old chap—you don't mind, do you—not now?" said Billy Durfee.

HE HAD GROWN OLD IN BOOKS

By Prince Vladimir Vaniatsky

HE had, as Horace says, grown old in books. In his eyes lay the contents of countless volumes and the dust of ancient tomes seemed always on his clothes. They were to him, these books, his very life, for he had passed it in their company.

When first they knew him he walked upright, with broad shoulders and a firm step. Then his eyes shone with the strength and life of youth and his lips parted often in laughter. But not so now! His golden youth lay locked in the alcoves of many libraries in many lands. Here, in Paris, at the Bibliothèque Nationale, were six years, the six years from twenty-five to thirty-one. The librarians did not know that six years of the student's life were locked up there with the priceless volumes. But they were, nevertheless.

His name was known everywhere as a student of great attainments. He was an Academician. Sometimes he wrote verse, wherein there was lacking the vibrant note of youth, though it was beautiful and its metre was as smooth as that of a master.

In his home the walls were covered with old engravings, portraits of persons long dead. Dust lay thick on the grand Érard, though now and then a great master would come and play for the student for friendship's sake.

His wines were old and rare, but with them he ate the simplest of food—a crust of bread, a bit of fish or a simple cutlet. These rich wines constituted the one sybaritic note in an æsthetic life; in their mellow depths lay the sunlight and life of years gone

by. Strange, was it not, that as he sipped these rare vintages no regret came to him for his sweet, fresh youth, which had been wasted with the dead inhabitants of books? Youthhood, the time of kisses and trystings, of the card-table and the race-track! He had never known its pleasures. His kisses lay upon the mouths of dead lovers, his gamings were those of long-forgotten beaux and nobles, and his horses were those of which historians told.

But his joyless, youthless life had also a recompense, for he had never known the misery of finding a loved one faithless, or himself penniless at the side of the card-table or in the paddock.

"To-morrow," he said to himself one night, as the old Burgundy trickled down his throat, "to-morrow I will commence work upon that charming chante-fable in the Elzevir." The glass that held the Burgundy was fragile crystal, and the rich, red heart of the wine glowed in the light from the candles upon the table. The student held it slantingly so that he could enjoy the play of the color against the white of the table linen.

"Ah," said he, rejoicingly, "when I am dead I shall not be forgotten, for the world will caress those volumes that bear my name, and say, 'Yes, he was truly great, for he lived only that his fellow-men might become wise without devoting their whole lives to the pursuit of knowledge.'"

This man had never loved anything save his books. Left an orphan to the care of a bookworm uncle, he had inherited his tastes. There had never been a woman whose smile was for

him. And think, I pray you, of what life is worth without woman's smiles!

His hair was still black, though many threads of white showed in the heavy masses that were thrown back from the marble of his forehead. His brow was broad and lofty, the brow of the student and thinker; his nose slender and sensitive, delicately arched like the profile of an old medallion; his lips calm and straight, and his chin firm and well modeled.

On the morrow he wended his way to the Bibliothèque Nationale, where once more he was at work. In his little alcove he pored over the charming little chante-fable that he was doing into another tongue, so that people across seas might read and be glad of the poetry of ages gone.

But as he came to leave that night a strange thing happened. A woman, young, slender and sensuous in appearance, fell on the sidewalk at his feet. He, the student, raised her to her feet, and, calling a cab, asked her where her home was, that he might take her there. She gave him an address in a street of Paris of which he had never heard, for it was in the new city, not in the old Faubourg where he lived, and where, two hundred years gone, his ancestors had lived in the same big *hôtel*, with the coat-of-arms carved in stone over its doorway.

He helped her out of the *fiacre* with ease and chivalry, for her ankle was sprained. He was so easy, so graceful, that one might have thought he had been used to acts of gallantry all his life. But then it was in the blood, for his father, and his father's father, and so on back for generations, had been courtiers and gallants.

"Oh, monsieur," she said, when he had carried her to a divan in her *salon* and had sent a servant after a doctor, "you do not know how grateful I am, and how my husband will thank you. May I not ask to whom I am indebted?"

"I am Othon de Rougehomme," he answered.

"And I am Marguerite de Larnly."

She remembered in an instant that he was a Comte de Rougehomme, and

a great littérateur, whom no hostess had ever been able to induce to play the lion in a *salon*. He remembered of reading, some two years past, of the wedding of a German countess and beauty to the Duc de Larnly, of one of the "upstart Bonaparte houses." He, of the de Rougehommes, who had been nobles of France back in the golden days of chivalry, looked down upon these new titles with such contempt that he never used his own title, calling himself simply "M. de Rougehomme."

And, when the doctor came, he bowed and left her.

Then that night, when he sat sipping his wine, he thought of her. Forgotten were the books that were to make his name famous to coming generations, and forgotten was that dead world in which he had lived so long. But to-night, oh, the joyful anguish when he saw that the red of the wine was as the red of her lips, and the darker tones where the light fell not were as the brown of her hair and glorious eyes.

His old housekeeper, who was old when he was young, wondered why he sat so long at table and drank so many glasses of that rare Burgundy, so rare that it has been years since a bottle of it was in the markets, so rare that it passes as an invaluable gift between sovereigns.

She would have been a bride, so he decided, worthy of one of those handsome gallants who had been his forefathers. She could have swept down the *salon* of the old château with all the grace of queenly womanhood.

Strange that as he tasted the wine he thought it must be flavored like her lips.

The hours went by, and still he sat there, sipping, sipping, ever so delicately, the life-giving grape-blood.

Then at last, not that he was wearied of thinking of her, but because he was body-tired, he went up the stairs to his bedroom.

His brow rested on his pillow and his eyes were closed.

She came to him, light and graceful, with arms whose skin was like

satin, and with eyes in which hung burning love-lamps.

They were in a grove of ilex, dark, mournful, green, and the white of broken marble columns gleamed from the earth. The green formed a wonderful background for the beauty of her body. Her hair fell in rich masses of brown about her.

He who had grown old in books became young in love. The countless volumes that lay in his eyes fell away, and his face became bright with the strength of passion and purpose. His shoulders, long stooped, grew erect, and his lips parted in laughter.

Back from many libraries in many distant lands hurried the lost years of his youth. Verse, light and graceful with the charming note of young life in it, flitted through his brain.

"Oh, my desire!" he cried, "why have you come here thus to taunt me, you who are wedded to another?"

And she answered him:

"Oh, my desire!" And then she sighed. "I come not here to taunt you, but, instead, to link my soul with yours. Across the fields of life we cannot walk together, but here, in this fair, far country, we may go hand in hand, strewing roses in our path and joining our lips in kisses sweeter than all wine."

Then he held out his arms to her and she leaned to his embrace, and he found her lips were a sweeter nectar than his rare Burgundy.

And so it was, night after night, always meeting and abiding with her in a companionship sweet in the strength of unreality. In lands of Summer they always lived, so that poppy blossoms and rosebuds might deck their garments and be entwined in their hair.

Then, after a while, men came and took him away, saying he was mad.



THE WAITING OF CIRCE

THE up-hill years drag by me; I must wait
 Until Ulysses comes, light of my eyes,
 Comes through the Eastern gate, more great than wise,
 Then passes through the West, more wise than great.

ALEXANDER JESSUP.



NOT IMPORTANT IF TRUE

MURIEL—Your brother proposed to me during the service in church last Sunday.

ZOE—You mustn't mind him. He often talks in his sleep.



A HEART that has been often tendered is likely to be tough.

THE ORIGINAL SUMMER GIRL

AFTER much biologic research,
 From evidence strong, I believe
 That I have found out,
 Beyond shadow of doubt,
 That the first Summer Girl was Eve.

She had unconventional ways,
 She lived out-of-doors, and all that;
 She was tanned by the sun
 Until brown as a bun,
 For she roamed 'round without any hat.

To a small garden-party she went,
 Where the men were exceedingly few;
 But she captured a mate
 And settled her fate,
 As often these Summer Girls do.

Now, my statement, of course, I have proved,
 But as evidence that isn't all;
 A Summer Girl she
 Is conceded to be
 Because she stayed there till the Fall.

CAROLYN WELLS.



NO WONDER

MRS. GRIMM (*musingly*)—The very stars are said to be set to harmony,
 and march to music as they revolve on their orbits.

MR. GRIMM (*sourly*)—Well, if it is the kind of music that accompanies the
 average parade, no wonder we hear so much about shooting stars. They
 ought to be shot!



A WAY TO THE DESIRED RESULT

“NO, sir, I cannot permit any man who drinks to be attentive to my
 daughter.”
 “Then why not let me marry her?”

A FLASH OF HONOR

By Vance Thompson

CLAUDIA drew the curtains and looked out. There was a welter of damp snow in the air, but she recognized the outlines of the buildings, the familiar church-spire of Auteuil, the dim line of the Meudon Hills and the dark, spidery network of the Eiffel Tower. Far down in the street the lamps were quivering points of ochre.

The wind and the snow and the darkness made the night intolerably dreary. She closed the curtains and went back to her chair by the fire. Her little Pomeranian dog came out and nipped at her dress; she pushed him away. She was bored; but then she was always bored; for five years her life had swung between the poles of need and boredom; so she yawned a little and stared at the cedarwood fire that snapped and sparkled in the bronze grate.

It was a handsome room, all white and gold, with dainty, gilded furniture in the style of Louis Quinze; there were whitish rugs on the floor, and the electric bulbs scattered a milky light. On the walls were pictures by Cazin—misty and gray; a nude girl sprawling greenly on the grass, by Henner, and a canvas of Monet, across which a file of lean purplish trees marched—pictures worth ephemeral kisses or a king's ransom. And in the corners, on pillars and bookcases and cabinets, dazzling white marble made a high light. There was a head of Rodin, there were satyrs, there were many busts—one of them that of a fat Parisian prince, his face deformed with evil thoughts and overfeeding—and all of them were signed, in deep letters, "Claudia Faber."

Some people were to sup with her that night—men and women. Claudia anticipated no great pleasure. It was such an often-turned page of her life. She knew them all—knew everything they would say—this faded gossip of the third-rate *salons*, of the studios and theatres and foreign "colonies" in Paris. She had known it five years. She could look back upon it all calmly, with cold scorn and self-contempt. Down the vista of years she saw the home from which she had come in that far-away city on the Hudson—the quiet, old-fashioned rooms—her mother reading by the window, her father arguing noisy politics with his friends on the porch—and herself, weaving dreams of which she was the splendid heroine, dreams of artistic conquest. Yes, she was to be the woman who did things in the world. Then Paris—the dull routine of Jullien's, the round of the studios, the hard technical work, the failure and the new endeavor. It was Dubois who said to her once, with studio familiarity: "My dear, the reason women artists fail is because they are never original."

And she thought of this remark for many days and determined to be original. She had drawn and painted and modeled; she had played the piano—she could sing. She looked over the field of art and letters. An exact translation of her thought would have been: "In order to be original, whom must I imitate?" She decided upon Rodin—this great, strong, stormful genius who has made sculpture almost as brutal as a page of Zola. She modeled strange phantasies in clay. She tried—ah, there were years

of desperate, pitiful endeavor, sad, heroic years. And in the little city on the Hudson the newspapers printed columns about her success—the irony of it!—and from the far-away home came letters of praise and encouragement. And one morning, when she looked in her mirror, she saw tired eyes and a whitening face.

Even as she had looked into her mirror, she looked into her self. She saw that she had misread her life—that she had mismade it. There, in her great, grim studio in the Latin Quarter, there came to her a knowledge that a woman's life is not a simple thing, that it cannot pivot itself upon art, that it is strangely complicated with needs and desires. She read the fact in her mirror and in her heart. The attrition of the years, the attrition of failure, had worn down her old high courage—courage of the woman to whom Art comes as some shining St. George, the deliverer. She knew at last that St. George, for all his silver mail, was but a man; and she locked the door of her studio behind her. She went away—as one goes from the sordid Bohemia of Henri Murger to that bright, tragic Bohemia by the sea-shore, where Prince Florizel idles as in Shakespeare's idyl.

Then she wrote home no more.

Some people were to sup with her that night. A gilt clock tinkled the hour of eleven. She stood up, with the air of a bored goddess, for she was beautiful, this woman. She was twenty-five years old, with cold, clear, steady gray eyes and great masses of brown hair. The face was white and almost regular, except for the fulness of the lips and the square-hewn look of the chin. She was tall and slight. From shoulder to ankle her body made that almost imperceptible curve of the typical American woman. She wore a creamy, whitish gown, all lace, that rippled about her and made her gracious and vague, a thing of soft, changing outlines. White lace and pearls—they softened her into a lyric beauty.

With a swift step that set all the

harmonies of her gown quivering she crossed the room to an alcove which served as music-room. For a moment she drew ill-tempered discords from the piano—still standing and trailing her left hand over the keys.

There came a little ripple of noise from the electric bell in the hall. Claudia sank down in a low chair and draped her skirt in carefully negligent folds. When the Prince entered she looked up with a smile. It was the smile of the actress adjusting herself to her rôle.

Prince Henry was in evening dress, a spray of white lilies in his button-hole. He was as fat, amiable and wicked as any prince of his ancient house.

"Ah, little democrat," he said, and touched Claudia's hair with puffy, caressing fingers.

"We can't all have divine rights," said Claudia, with a little laugh.

"Woman's divine right is to be beautiful," said the Prince.

He sauntered about the room, smoking a cigarette. Now and then he stopped and patted her cheek, caressing her as though she were a pet dog.

Claudia rose to receive her guests—a strange horde of dukes and dancers, counts and players, *rastuoquères* from the South American republics, black diplomats from Hayti, Bréval from the Opéra and Nina Pack from the Opéra Comique, Parisians notorious for their duels or their automobiles, their vices or their virtues, déclassé Russians and Americans, rogues and royalties, old names and new money, jockeys and journalists—the drift-wood of midnight Paris. They wandered through the white-and-gold rooms, shrilly joyous. Claudia did not know all of them. Some were friends of the Prince, and his friends brought their friends—it was almost an endless progression. She found herself next to a small and dapper little man with a dark mustache and cynical eyes.

"You do not know me," he said.

"M. de Rhion brought me."

"Ah, the Count Teuf-Teuf,"

Claudia replied. "Did he bring you in an automobile?"

"Yes," said the dapper man, with a laugh. Then he added: "My name is L'Heritier."

"You are the man from Africa," she cried, wonderingly. It seemed impossible that this smiling, graceful dandy should have been the hero of that headlong rush though black, unexplored regions toward the Tchad.

L'Heritier bowed, smiling.

"And the other one?" asked Claudia—"the man who escaped from the Rabah?"

"He is there—do you see?—by the bookcase in the corner. Shall I bring him to you?"

"Yes," she said, "you know we are compatriots."

Before she spoke she had seen him. He was standing a little apart, looking on with an air of quiet curiosity. He was dressed, like everyone else, in the livery of evening, and yet he did not seem quite like anyone else. As he approached Claudia noticed what a fine animal he was—broad-shouldered, deep in the chest, towering a foot above little L'Heritier. He looked at her gravely and bowed. When their eyes met Claudia had the impression that he was speaking to her. She stammered a little and said, "What?" Then her confusion passed. She smiled up at him with a face as bright and cold as a diamond. The man sat down beside her.

"You must tell me all about Africa, Captain Pearce," she said, "and all your adventures."

"You would find it very dull," he said; "it was a stupid business—hunting food, bullying the blacks and listening to L'Heritier's verses."

"But you were a prisoner," Claudia said. She leaned toward him in a pretty, urgent way, and the movement disengaged a mist of heady perfume. Pearce drew away a little; the odor disturbed him.

"Yes, I was a prisoner and all that, but I got away," he said. "You must ask L'Heritier to tell you all about it. He was the head of the mission, you know. I was only a sort of volunteer.

I failed to get down to Cuba for the war, and this seemed the next best thing."

"You and M. L'Heritier are great friends?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't know," he replied. "We got to know each other pretty well—one does out there, you know. I like that bust over there," he added, abruptly. "It is the Prince, isn't it?"

Claudia nodded.

"It's a success," Pearce went on.

For a moment Claudia did not speak. A sort of gray weariness came over her face, and he thought she was older than he had fancied. At last she said: "Success? That is something that only men can know. Women were not made for it. We try for it. We fight harder than men. And always we fail. Always we fail as artists. It is only when we are content to be women, and nothing more, that we succeed."

"Surely you, of all women, should not say that," Pearce said, gently; "you've done so much and done it so well. I remember that group of yours in the Salon years ago—the woman kneeling, and the child. I've often thought of it. Out in Africa there I used to think of it. That is the reason I came to-night. I wanted to meet you—to see you."

"To see me—yes. Like you, I am a celebrity," she said, harshly; "but it's not for what I've done—it's for what I am."

"You've given up your work?" Pearce asked.

"My last masterpiece," Claudia said, with grim self-mockery, "was the Prince's bust—the one you like."

"It is interesting," the man said. He was disturbed and a trifle angry. He had come this night to see Claudia, as he might have gone to Maxim's or the Folies Bergère, or any other "sight" of Paris. He had wanted to see this woman who lit up midnight Paris like a torch. And now he was angry with himself and with her; he thought that had she not been an American—of his own race and blood—he should not have cared much. As it was, the thing hurt him. He was

anxious to get away—to get out into the clean Winter air—and walk it off, but when the Prince strolled up to them he kept his place.

"I was a bit of an explorer myself," the Prince was saying, "when I was younger—a volunteer like yourself. It's a hard life, but pleasant to look back on."

Pearce acquiesced.

"Dull, though," the Prince added, touching Claudia's hair. "One misses this."

Claudia flushed a little at the proprietary caress, but she laughed radiantly and said: "Surely there are women in Africa?"

"Mere women," yawned the Prince, "beasts of burden—the men over there have never taken the trouble to invent souls for them."

He patted Claudia's cheek and strolled away. Pearce looked at her gloomily.

"I should not have come to see you," he said. "I never should have seen you."

For one moment the mask fell from her face; he saw neither smiles nor mockery, and in her eyes he read something that seemed to be fear rather than love.

Without a word she rose and went swiftly across the room to where the Prince lolled by the fire. Pearce watched her lean toward him, a smile on her lips. As they chatted she took the lilies from the Prince's buttonhole and broke them between her nervous fingers, scattering the white petals at her feet; and to Pearce the act was the symbol of her rôle on earth—the symbol of her work of conscious and voluntary destruction.

He went away without speaking to her.

In the street the wind and snow met him, but it seemed to him that there was about him still the faint mist of perfume that had stolen from her hair and garments.

Claudia did not sleep that night.

She rose very early, as she had done in the old studio days. Life seemed different and very strenuous. She

did not call her maid, and dressed quickly, putting on a slim, gray gown that looked much like those she had worn in her working life. She combed her hair back from her forehead, smooth and straight. It was the way she had dressed it when she was sixteen. And why she did this she did not know.

Her mirror told her that she was pale and not pretty. She was not sorry. She liked the firm white face that framed itself in her mirror. It seemed like an old friend. She noticed that she looked strangely like her mother—she had never thought of that before—and somehow or other it made her happy.

Eight o'clock; the maids had not risen yet. Claudia went into the kitchen and made herself a cup of coffee over the gas-stove. The drawing-room was not habitable; it reeked with odors of dying flowers, stale tobacco smoke and old perfumes. The dining-room was littered with glasses and the wreckage of supper, playing-cards, counters and forgotten gloves.

Claudia carried her coffee into the little blue boudoir adjoining her bed-chamber and sat down by the open window. The morning was chill, but a broad sun, level with the house-tops, made it beautiful.

Her thoughts traveled back to that one moment when he had said: "I should never have seen you," and for the hundredth time she analyzed the remark. He should never have seen her as she was then—that was what he meant. She recalled the sound of his voice and the pain in it. She could think of nothing else. All night she had thought of it. "I should never have seen you"—it was a confession and a promise.

She knew she loved him—knew that at last love had come to her, after all the troubled years. And how strange it was! They had been born within a bird's flight of each other. All their youth they might have known and loved each other. Life had scattered them—sent them to wander over far continents and through alien adventures, but always

life had meant to bring them together at the right moment. The man who was made for the woman and the woman who was made for the man—always they meet, some time in the years.

And these two had met. She had known it when she first looked into his eyes. She had almost cried aloud to him: "You have come—oh, at last, you have come!" Why had he not said to her: "Yes, I have come—now the comedy is over—put away your stage costumes and shut the door—we will go away hand in hand, together always?" He had not said it, and she had been forced to finish the night's performance; but now he would come—how well she knew he would come! The lights were out, the curtain had fallen forever on that red stage; it was morning and the sun was shining, and he was coming—

There in the sun-drenched window Claudia stood, repeating: "He is coming—coming nearer and nearer—up the steps"—then with a little cry she ran to the hall door and threw it open.

Pearce stood there, haggard and gray. He was wrapped in a fur coat and had not changed his evening clothes. She gave him both her hands and drew him in.

"I've not been home," he said, "all night."

"I know," she whispered. "I was with you every minute while you walked the streets."

"I know you were," he said.

She led him into the blue boudoir—into the light and freshness of the morning—and stood in front of him, waiting.

"You are different," Pearce said, slowly. "I thought you would look like this—I have always thought of you like this. Now that I have seen you as you are it will not be so hard."

"Sit down here by the window," she said, "where the sunlight falls on your face. All my life I have loved your face," she whispered, and sank down on the floor at his knees. "Listen, do not speak yet," she went on,

softly. "Let me tell you first, and then you shall tell me. I have always known that I should meet you. Even when I was a little girl I knew. Your face was just as it is now with the sunlight on it. I used to dream of you, and at night I used to talk to you. And once you told me that I had a star, and that it should lead me to you. Do you remember? I tried so hard. If you knew how I had suffered! But of course you know, for you have suffered, too. At first I thought my art was the star that should lead me to you. And I was true to it; I loved it because it was to lead me to you. That was all. But oh, the years, and the weary years! Then I knew that I had followed the wrong star, and I feared I should never find you, never find you!"

She laid her head on his knees and sobbed softly. He placed his hand upon her hair, but the gesture woke a memory in him that burned like acid, and he drew away his hand and sat motionless, watching her shaken body. At last she looked up at him; her eyes and face were wet with tears, but not sad.

She said: "Then I knew that I was too weak to find you; that you must come to me. I let myself go, just drifting in life. And I was sure that before the waves went over my head you would come and save me; and you have come, oh, you have come at last!"

With a great sob of happiness she clung to him.

Even then he did not speak.

"That is all. I have told you my whole life," she murmured. "Now tell me."

"Stand up," the man said.

He took her hands and held her at arm's length, his eyes in hers.

"I believe all you say," he added, after a moment, "but what difference can it make? And I love you; but that, too, can make no difference. I fought it all out last night. You have not thought things out as I have or you would understand. The fact that you have not thought of these things shows that you are a good

woman. But I must think of them. If we were in a hut in Africa I should think of them, everywhere and always. I have come too late."

Pearce spoke in a quiet, dull voice, without visible emotion. Claudia listened in silence, subjugated to his mood.

"I'm trying to make it plain to you," he said. "I am quite sure I have always loved you—that I shall never be happy without you—but I do not dare to be happy at the price. I can't go into your life, and it is too late for you to come into mine. It isn't that our love would make us better or worse. It is only that we are too far apart. You want me to re-create your youth. You want me to make you what you were back at that moment when we should have met. And that I cannot do, Claudia. I can't kill your past, and I can't live with it. It is in your hair, and your gestures, and your eyes—it is half of you. Not to-day, perhaps, but in a month or a year it will come back. I

shall see it in your walk or in your laugh, and I shall hate you and myself. It is too late. That is what I came to tell you this morning. You know as well as I do it is too late."

The woman held herself erect. When she spoke it was in a voice as dull as his own.

"You do not doubt my love? Nor that I have loved you all my life?"

"No," he said.

"You will not see me again? You will not try to help me? You will not trust me—and you know you could make of me anything you wished—you will not?"

"No," he repeated.

She bent and kissed his hands, one and then the other. Then, without a word, without a cry, without a sob, she threw herself on the *canapé* and hid her face.

Pearce did not look at her. He went slowly out of the room.

Afterward he knew that he had left his youth there.



IN THE NIGHT

LOVE comes back at the end of day,
Love, whom the morning led astray.
To the darkened House of Hope, at last,
Love comes back at the end of day.

"I have seen the Earth and the ways thereof,
And oh! I am wearied out!" saith Love.
"And better it is to be at rest.
I have seen the Earth and the ways thereof!"

"Thrice-barred gate and fast-closed door,
Open and close on me nevermore.
Is it all too late to enter in,
Thrice-barred gate and fast-closed door?"

Love stands waiting out in the night,
But there comes no answering step or light;
The House of Hope is as still as death.
Love stands waiting out in the night!

ARTHUR KETCHUM.

TWO IN A BOAT

By Charles Raymond Barrett

“**I**T looks rather small for two,” observed Kitty, doubtfully, as she rocked the little canoe with the tip of her little slipper. Everything about Kitty is little—except her impudence—and I rather resented her implied slight to my fairy craft.

“It’s big enough to be lonesome for one,” I retorted, rather smartly, I thought.

Kitty glanced up and showed her white teeth in a flash of wicked laughter. “Even two would be a crowd in that thing,” she said, with a contemptuous little kick at the bobbing boat. “I’m afraid you’ll have to excuse me, Fred—till your boat grows a little.”

“Now see here, Kitty—” I began, humbly enough; and then, as usual, the lurking mischief in her half-veiled eyes upset my carefully calculated poise, and I cried, explosively: “By all the gods and little fishes! if you don’t get into that boat this minute and quit your fooling, I’ll—I’ll—chuck you in and paddle you away like a sack of potatoes, as sure as my name is Fred Fairfield!”

“Your name would be Dennis if you tried it—with Mr. Peters looking on from the hotel piazza,” remarked Kitty, with the most exasperating coolness. “Unfortunately, I’m *not* spuds, and so cannot be treated with your usual politeness.”

“You can be—blessed, for all I care!” I sputtered, choosing my words to suit a warning look in her eyes; and I tumbled recklessly into the tipsy boat and dipped my paddle into the still lake. “Shall I tell the Munsons you were ill—or simply ill-tempered?”

“Ill, if you’re wise; they’d never

believe the other,” she answered, sweetly; and then, having satisfied her love for contrariness, and having sufficiently humiliated me before the crowded piazza, she added, plaintively: “I don’t see how you expect me to get into that boat when you’re ten feet from shore—you *know* I can’t swim.”

I dipped my paddle deeper, fully intending to punish the little coquette by leaving her in the lurch; but the cranky little craft—secretly named after her—had caught something of her spirit; and, spite of my determination, it turned toward her and bumped softly against the pier at her feet.

“Come!” I said, shortly, feeling that fate was against me; and steady- ing the canoe with one hand I ex- tended the other to help her in.

Cautiously she gathered her pretty skirts about her, and still more cautiously she set one slippers foot on the bottom of the boat; for, though there was no room for fear in her small person, she had a dainty woman’s feline horror of getting wet. So when, with malice aforethought, I joggled the boat just a bit, she collapsed into my ready arms—a delicious jumble of lacey skirts, straying hair and angry femininity.

Her first thought, of course, was for her rumpled draperies, and by the time they were smoothed down we were well into the moonlit lake.

“Fred Fairfield,” she began, in an icy, incisive tone very strange from her, “put me ashore this instant!—this instant, do you hear?”

“Presently,” I responded, wickedly enjoying this little tempest that I had

raised. "We shall soon be at the Munsons'."

"The Munsons'! I'm not going there! I'm going back home—this instant, too! I won't stay another minute in the same boat with you!"

"I'm very sorry," I said, pathetically, "but I suppose you know best. If you must go ashore, please don't capsize me when you jump overboard. I promised the Munsons we'd be over to-night, and I must at least explain matters."

Kitty gasped. For the first time in our long friendship I had her completely at my mercy—it had always been the other way before. If she could have swum a stroke, I verily believe she would have gone overboard and taken her chances; but the odds against her were too great. She acknowledged her defeat—to herself—in an instant; but when she spoke she only changed her point of attack.

"You *know* you joggled the boat on purpose, Fred Fairfield!"

"Did I ever deny it?" I asked, blandly.

Another gasp from Miss Kitty, and a further realization of her Waterloo.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she asserted, cuttingly, falling back on generalities.

"I don't see why," I retorted, sharply; but, seeing her pleasure at my anger, I controlled myself and continued, calmly: "You thought differently when *you* were carrying matters with a high hand—on the pier just now, for instance. It's a long worm that has no turning, Kitty dear; and this worm has turned at last."

"I'm not 'Kitty dear'—to you, at least," she replied, still dodging the real question at issue.

"Mr. Peters's 'Kitty dear,' perhaps," I sneered.

"Perhaps." She caught a note of jealousy in my voice—or thought she did—and was radiant in a moment. "Anyhow, Mr. Peters is always a gentleman."

"Because he is always treated like one, perhaps," I hinted.

"Perhaps," she echoed; but she was no longer radiant.

Then—honestly, it was not intentional; I was too busy keeping up my end of the quarrel—there was a little crash from the canoe, a little shriek from Kitty, and a little "Damn!" from me; and then Kitty and canoe and I were bobbing and splashing together in the water.

My first impulse was to laugh at the thought of my doing such a fool thing; but the next instant the clutch of Kitty's hand on my arm reminded me that to her this was no joke. Before she fairly knew what had happened I had picked her up like a feather—a wet and bedraggled one, I'll admit—and seated her safely but rather dizzily on the flat bottom of the overturned canoe; while I held lightly to the stern, with my head just above water, and tried to steady it.

"Oh, Fred," she sputtered through her streaming hair, "I *am* so wet!" and then, struck by the brilliancy of her remark, we both burst out laughing, and there was no longer any danger of hysterics.

"What shall we do?" she asked, presently. "I can't sit here all night—I'm cold, and it's awful slippery. Can't you get up here and— and help me to hold on?"

"Oh, you won't slip off," I answered, lightly; "and I'll put you on again if you do. There isn't room enough for two up there, and I'm very well here. But perhaps I can make you feel more comfortable." And I did succeed in doing so, much to my satisfaction—and to hers, too, I think—though just how is no matter.

"I could easily turn the old tub over and paddle you ashore, only, you see, she struck a sunken stump, and there's something of a hole in the bottom."

"So we'll just have to wait here until somebody comes!" she said, not so dolefully as might have been expected. "Aren't you awfully cold?"

"Oh, no, I'm all right. How about you?"

But for some reason her answer was irrelevant. "And so near the shore, too!—that's the most provoking part of it."

"Yes. You see, there's a sand bar here with old stumps on it. I knew of the danger well enough, but you were so unkind that I never thought of it."

"Was I unkind?" she asked, contritely. "Poor boy!" and she smoothed the water out of my hair. "I didn't really mean to be."

"It was certainly unkind to act as you did on the pier," I answered, with proper severity.

"But you knew I was only fooling!"

"And it was still more unkind to talk as you did of Mr. Peters."

"But you *knew* I didn't mean it."

"How did I know it?" I thought the question natural enough, but she appeared surprised.

"Why, I supposed, of course, that you could see," she answered, vaguely.

"See what?" I persisted.

"That—why, that I didn't care for Mr. Peters."

"And that you *did* care for me?" I hazarded.

In answer she raised her eyes and gave me that one look, deep into her very soul, for which I had so longed; but she said no word.

"And now that's all settled, let's go ashore," I said, somewhat later—just how long is immaterial.

It is a question whether she was more surprised at my words or my tone.

"But I thought—" she began.

"You thought that we should have to stay here till we were rescued; for I neglected to tell you that I have been standing on the bottom all this time, and that the old sandbar forms a highway—but not exactly a *dryway*—to the shore."

And before she could voice the reproof in her eyes I had taken her in my arms and waded ashore with her, where I "dumped her just like a sack of potatoes," as Kitty said some time after; for at that time she would not speak to me.



SONG OF THE SUMMER COTTAGER

I LOVE the Summer season, when the city is forsaken
 And the social swarm has scattered, seeking mountain, shore and hill;
 Where the mending of the morals and complexion's undertaken,
 And the husband isn't hustled nightly off against his will.

Exultant I in exile when the dreadful task of dining
 With a dozen stupid people isn't hanging o'er my head,
 Or of racing to receptions, when I'd rather be reclining,
 And after I have puffed a pipe go blissfully to bed.

Oh, the blest release from dancing, for at balls I fear they take me
 Too often for a waiter, as I watch my wife afar.
 The capering and canoodling only weary me, and make me
 Feel as might a twinkling taper that is hitched unto a star!

Most I love the Summer season for the calm, domestic meeting—
 There's no time for such reunions in the feverish city life.
 'Tis the home-fond husband's holiday—alas! too brief and fleeting—
 When he's privileged to renew an acquaintance with his wife!

ERNEST DELANCEY PIERSON.

THE SOCIAL STATUS OF YAPHANK

“WHAT kind of a town have you here, my friend?” asked a Summer resort tourist from the city, addressing a sour-looking citizen of Yaphank who was sitting humped up and grunting in a chair on the porch of the tavern.

“Aw, this is the place,” was the acrid reply, “where a couple of young idiots were married in a store window about a week ago, and also the place where the folks that think themselves society leaders play croquet in golf clothes; it’s the place where a magnetic healer is Summering for his health, and the handsomest unmarried preacher in town stutters like a gosh-darned corn-popper; where they ain’t got through with that infernal twentieth century problem yet; where gentlemen of the old school occasionally pull each other’s noses for exercise; where we have ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin’ three times a year, and like it every time; where they have elected a postage stamp collector for Mayor, and where a reformed life insurance agent regularly takes up collections in church.

“This is also the locality where the Don’t Worry Club has a hair-pulling ’most every session; where the leading undertaker is president of the Christian Science Coterie; where there have been enough gold bricks bought at different times, by persons

who couldn’t afford such luxuries, to build a monument; where a petrified man exhibition or a two-headed calf show is called an entertainment; where an old man has demonstrated that he can be happy though married to a girl of nineteen; where there’s a washing-machine agent that writes poetry; where every fortune teller that comes along reaps a rich harvest; where a man by the name of Jones spells it ‘Joughnes’ and isn’t mobbed; where the swell young men have their photographs taken in the act of playin’ the mandolin; where they think checker playing is sport, and where the Board of Selectmen consists of a flying-machine inventor, a long-whiskered man that has printed a pamphlet declaring that the world is flat, a horse doctor that lectures on theosophy at odd spells, and a former circus clown.

“It’s the place, too, where— Look out! Confound it, young man; don’t hit against that leg o’ mine again! I’ve had the rheumatism in it ever since I don’t know when, and it hurts like the livin’ fury all the time. Wa-al, the foregoing are some of the peculiarities of this place. You can just figure it out for yourself what kind of a town it is. In my humble opinion, Yaphank is the Indian word for dumfoolery, but you can take it that way or any other, just as it suits you.”

TOM P. MORGAN.



À LA MORT

FOR years he strove dull Time to kill
With futile wile and idle whim,
Till finally the duel closed,
When with a stroke old Time killed him.

WOOD LEVETTE WILSON.

THE WANDERING DIAMOND

By W. J. Thorold

I WAS born, so I heard a Harvard sophomore say one moonlit evening, æons ago; but, like a woman, a diamond is just as young as it looks. Moreover, I feel more youthful to-day than ever before, and I know I am a good deal brighter—a fact that's due, I don't mind telling you, more to my present pretty possessor than to myself. However, I first saw the light, as biographers turn the phrase, on the day the new year rolled into Kimberley on a shell from a howitzer.

You see, I had lived, or rather existed, up to that time in the strictest seclusion; my residence was on a very quiet avenue away down in the De Beers mine. You had to climb up to my little street over some very primeval rocks and then crawl into it as if it were the neck of a very large bottle of champagne—a commodity with which I have since learned we diamonds, as a class, are associated in the popular mind. So it happened that a ray from a perfecto instead of a sunbeam greeted my advent into this somewhat noisy and naughty world, where it seems I was destined to a delightful career and to be as much sought after as any beautiful débutante.

The first words I ever heard on this earth—I should say in this earth—were from the lips of that adventurous son of a Devonshire clergyman, the Colossus of Kimberley, as he blew a fragrant puff of smoke curling into the darkness. He said:

“If Oom Paul’s to get that two million pounds they ought to work for it, you know.”

A distinct detonation appeared to indicate that Long Tom thought so, too, and was doing his best. I could

just faintly hear the bursting of the shell from the howitzer and its ugly echo rumbling through the mine.

Without regarding this as an interruption, the diamond king continued:

“Well, Colonel, I don’t think his burghers will ever find me here.”

“Nor I, old chap,” answered Colonel Kekewich, who commanded the forces in the besieged town. “If they do, they’ll have to use a corkscrew to get you out, that’s all.”

Then the millionaire’s coat sleeve brushed against some dirt on my face, his hand touched me—and he pulled me out. And there shone on me the dull light of Cecil Rhodes’s cigar, a fragrant weed from old Havana.

“By Jove!” he exclaimed. “Look at that! There’s a smart diamond for you!”

“Thanks,” laughed the genial Kekewich, without losing the chance to take him literally.

Rhodes was always a thoroughbred, so he handed me to the soldier.

“You remember old de Beauregard in Paris?” inquired the British commander.

“On the Boulevard Saint-Germain?” asked the empire builder.

“Yes.”

“Especially that night Kitchener played chess with de Beauregard?”

“My belt was too tight.”

“After dinner, Colonel—not until after dinner.”

“And you, Rhodes, where were you?”

“Do you remember the drawing-room in green and gold?”

“Well, rather!” Kekewich exclaimed.

"And Monsieur de Beauregard's niece from America—with the strange name?"

"Why, it was Grant. There's nothing strange about that."

"I mean her Christian name."

"Oh, yes."

"Those perfect features and the melting brown eyes!"

"Yes, of course!" agreed Colonel Kekewich, intensely amused at the abstraction and enthusiasm of this man, who is so generally supposed to have an arctic heart.

"You know I have always wondered if she was the original of Professor Herkomer's portrait of 'The Lady in White.'"

"Same name—Miss Grant."

"They do have beautiful women in New York, don't they?" continued Rhodes. "And not all due to the uniform, either."

"Not a bit of it," acknowledged his companion, turning me over in his hand. "Stunning taste, and all that. But quite apart from the tailor, deucedly fine figures, well groomed, spirited, full-blooded, high steppers, fed on—Damme! Are we talking of women or horses? I sent de Beauregard a letter a month ago."

"Wonder if it went to Paris or Pretoria?" reflected Rhodes.

"Lord knows," replied Kekewich.

"How did you send it?"

"By Captain Norton."

"Well," said Rhodes, "Alan's a bright fellow—always has his pockets full of bright sovereigns and his brain full of bright devices. I'll wager he got past the burghers' pickets."

"Hope so," answered the officer. "He's a Canadian, and I'd hate to record his name on our casualty list."

"He's a jolly good sort. But the letter to de Beauregard?"

"In it," said Kekewich, "I promised to send him a souvenir of this siege. Rhodes, I've got a brilliant idea—this diamond. I'll send it to him by the next native runner who tries to get through the Boer lines."

"Capital!" said Rhodes. "And I'll send his niece a message."

"By cable?"

"Good! Why not? Best wishes from Kimberley."

That night I left Kimberley. I was wrapped with careless precision in a newspaper, and expected, after a few days' trekking across the veldt, to be mailed to France from Cape Town. But just at the foot of a steep kopje, the Basuto who had me and a cablegram in his knapsack was shot by an outpost—a soldier of fortune who, by his uniform, was a Cossack. The cable message was read and buried. Then I was quickly discovered. And there shone on me the stealthy light of the sentinel's lantern—a cunning contrivance made in Germany. In my vivid and young imagination I immediately began to picture myself in St. Petersburg, gleaming in the splendid diadem of the great White Czar of all the Russias.

Before morning had come I realized the truth of the old maxim about the best laid plans of mice and men. The Muscovite member of the Foreign Legion, who turned out to be a refugee from Siberia, took me to Colonel Villebois de Mareuil. They had an argument which I couldn't hear. They might as well have sent me off peacefully, for neither of them has derived his share from my sale; the sentinel is in St. Helena, and I don't know where Villebois is. The bullet bearing the summons from Methuen may be able to tell.

However, in five days I was in President Kruger's house—though he never bothered to look at me. The wily old man was too busy arranging some business with Webster Davis. I have always been prejudiced against whiskers, because I regard their wearers as proverbially mean. But I must admit that in this case my theory was proved untenable; the chief executive was very liberal. In twenty-four hours more I left Lourenço Marques in a neat parcel addressed to Dr. Leyds at Vienna.

The journey was uneventful, but the very evening I arrived in that picturesque capital I overheard the European representative of the Transvaal

say to his private secretary, just as he took me from my wrapping:

"Wire Krüger by the Steyn cipher that a Captain Alan Norton, who escaped from Kimberley, is now in New York buying horses for the British cavalry. He has just placed a contract for ten thousand."

"Yes, sir."

"If anyone calls for me this evening say I've gone to Amsterdam."

"Yes, sir," said the man of shorthand.

"But," continued the representative, "if any English or American newspaper correspondents call, open a bottle of wine and say I've gone to see the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs."

"Very good, sir."

"That's where I am going. Add that to the wire to Pretoria."

"Is that all, sir?"

"Yes, that's all."

Then the doctor put me into his pocket and took a brougham for a house in the Josefsplatz. I anticipated a treat listening to the two discuss momentous secrets of State. The gentleman from South Africa was received most cordially by the great Austrian, a personage whom I found not only interesting but fascinating. He had long hair—very long—and he had such fine shoulders, that minister, so soft and round and dimpled. Cold as I usually am, I could not help the reflection that magnetism is much a matter of curves. And there shone on me the dim, tinted light of the purple apartment, that was furnished by a brother of the Caliph from Constantinople.

I wondered what my fate would be—if I was to be given to this Minister of Foreign Affairs? All that night I was in doubt.

II

A FEW days afterward I left Vienna, in the portmanteau of the representative, for Paris. We arrived at night, and drove, for some reason, through the Bois and the Boulevard Saint-Germain; but I could get no opportunity

for even a passing glimpse at the house of the expectant de Beauregard, to whom I was sent by Colonel Kekewich. The next morning early I left Dieppe for New Haven, *en route* for the English metropolis, and, incredible as it may seem, carried by the same undiplomatic diplomat.

It was evening when we arrived in London. We went, bag and luggage, in a hansom, right through Downing street and across Trafalgar Square to a house near by—I do not care to divulge the exact location. But as the daring doctor opened the bag for a moment, there shone on me the flickering light of the iron lilies of the Strand—discovered by Richard Le Gallienne. My custodian, fearing some acquaintances in Scotland Yard, never went out by day or by night, and his only visitors for a fortnight or more were a few radical and peace politicians who argued a good deal about figures. Being in a remote corner of the adjoining room I could hear but little save a constant clink.

At length, however, I was dispatched by registered mail to a city whose name caused me to beam as soon as I heard it mentioned while it was scratched by a stub pen on my wrapper, for it was Washington. By the time I reached that magnificent city of circles and distances the Government official to whom I was consigned had resigned his position to enter on a lecture tour, according to the clever arrangements I heard of in Pretoria. This gentleman from Missouri had always been a star as a sympathy arouser, beginning with the night he tried theatrically to gain a mayoralty election in his native town by shooting a hole through his own hat.

Taking me to New York, the farsighted financier disposed of me there to a wholesale diamond merchant. The following week I was displayed in a very resplendent shop on Union Square, which I soon discovered to be Tiffany's. If I were at all inclined to the sin of vanity, my experience would certainly have accentuated that tendency, for the admiration I re-

ceived was enough to turn the head of any innocent young jewel. I would blush to confess the flatteries to which I was weak enough to listen.

One day a handsome, swarthy Egyptian prince, visiting the Turkish Legation, looked long at me. His name, I found out, was Mustapha Pasha. Again I pictured for myself a royal destiny sparkling beside a white lotus flower on the bosom of some modern Cleopatra in a palace on the banks of the Nile.

Then came a woman who looked like La Pompadour, as I imagined, from a miniature near me in the showcase, that very earthly divinity looked during her glowing days, or, rather, nights. This woman lacked the characteristic patch, but she was powdered and rouged like the capricious vixen who kept her finger-tip on the heart and the sceptre of Louis XV. The beauty was dressed in scarlet from head to foot, and I considered the tint quite appropriate. Yet there was something about her that made me think that perhaps she was not so red as she was gowned. She was accompanied by a Japanese spaniel and an old man who spoke with a Wall street accent. Very fittingly, no doubt, he called her "Caprice." And the clerk, who seemed to know them both, addressed him as Senator Lary. When they asked my price, she said, in a suggestive way, that her Kaffirs had fallen down. I thought this was something unmentionable at first, but soon learned that it was simply a hint he didn't take. Then Caprice looked at me disdainfully through her lorgnette, as if diamonds of high value were no more to her than pearls of pure thought. I would have been willing to wager that I could surmise correctly what hotel in Broadway she lived at, and perhaps, following up the clue of her pet name, under the alias of Miss C. A. Price. But the lady or the broker did not touch me, for which I was very thankful, and when they walked away I fairly scintillated with joy.

That same afternoon, about three

o'clock, a young man came in, and after he had looked at a number of solitaires I caught his eye. He took me up and turned me around. Then he looked at his watch as if moments were worth millions to him. This is how I discovered the hour—and also something else. But I don't think it was a wish for any knowledge of the time on his part that caused him to gaze so intently at his chronometer and then at me, for in the case there was the picture of a girl. I stole several glances at her, she was so beautiful a creature. Truly, her face was as lovely as a painter's dream. From the portion of her bust that appeared, I surmised that her figure must be lithe and graceful, and that she dressed fashionably. Then it suddenly dawned upon me that she was of the type Cecil Rhodes had said to Colonel Kekewich was to be found in New York.

By this time it will readily be believed that I had become greatly interested and deeply curious. Knowing that in the long run a diamond always finds its way to a woman, I confess I wished intensely to pass to her, and prayed it might be soon. I had scarcely time for my observations and the formulation of this hope when the young man closed his watch, and, after having me weighed, inquired my price after I should be set according to his ideas, which I hoped, for his sake, were hers. On being told the sum, which I regard as a secret, he immediately paid for me in English sovereigns. This was a point for a carbon Sherlock Holmes. Then he glanced hastily over a half-dozen little box-cases, and selected one lined with green silk.

"Shall we send it?" asked the clerk.

"Yes," answered the young man.

"The name," said the clerk, pencil and pad in hand.

The young man handed him a card, engraved upon which I saw: "Mr. Alan Norton." The sight of these words, and the quids, at once led me to conclude that he was probably the captain who escaped from Kimberley.

"And the address?" asked the clerk.

"Hoffman House," answered Mr. Norton.

So much curiosity had I developed that one would almost suspect me of having spent most of my life in the company of women.

Two days more passed quickly, and I was delivered to my purchaser at his hotel. He was just going to dinner, but he took me into his bedroom and carefully locked the door. Then, opening out the box I was in, he placed me, with a smile, in front of a large photograph on his dresser as if I were a candle and she were a saint, for the photograph was a pose in full figure of the girl in the watch. Lying there, looking up at her and sparkling in the light of her kindly eyes, I knew by his earnest face that Alan worshipped her as a zealot his God—and I did not blame him.

A knock sounded on his door.

"Yes," said he.

"Dinner is served," came, with an accent, from outside, and with an intonation that indicated that its owner bore the plebeian name of Jones or Watkins.

So Mr. Norton restored me to the green-silk case and dropped me into his breast-pocket, while I heard him say, half-aloud:

"No human eye shall ever see you till you are given to—"

But I couldn't catch her name, so I was still in suspense.

After dinner that evening he called on his inamorata.

"Is Miss Grant at home?" I heard him say to the servant that answered the bell.

The mention of this name gave me a start. I was on the tiptoe of expectation, waiting eagerly to hear her Christian name, and wondering if it was one that would be called strange. The start raised me up a little in Mr. Norton's pocket. I was disappointed at having no chance to see her immediately; but I could hear her voice: it had a promise of a caress in every note. If I only had a soul, that voice would have stolen it away.

Every glance and action of Alan's showed clearly that she was his idol. Once, when she was sitting at the piano singing one of the solos from "A Greek Slave," which she thanked him for having sent her, he came very near telling her that he loved her; but she, feeling, with a woman's intuition, that this confession was coming, suddenly, and apparently with malice aforethought, began playing a march in rag-time. Ever since, I have failed to appreciate syncopation. Of course, that perversion of music rendered the very idea of a proposal ridiculous. So, in what I thought a vain endeavor to cover up his real feelings, Norton began to laugh and joke, and I rather surmise that this caused Miss Grant to suspect both the depth and sincerity of his love. As they said good-night he arranged to go with her to the theatre the following Wednesday evening to see a play called "Near the Throne," founded on a novel of the same name, whose Coptic heroine, I heard him tell her, she closely resembled in more ways than one.

"Good-night," she said to him the third time.

"Good-night, Miss Grant," he answered, and left—with me in his pocket.

I am sure Mr. Norton wished he did not have to use that surname, but it led me away back again to my birthday in the De Beers mine. I have always disliked persons who draw hasty conclusions; therefore I resolved to wait patiently to find out the Christian name of Miss Circumstances. I called her this because she altered cases.

III

On returning to his rooms, Alan wrapped me up in three folds of green tissue paper, sealed it with wax, and put me tenderly under his pillow. All the next day he carried me in the upper left-hand pocket of his waistcoat.

When Mr. Norton was dressing for the theatre, with me lying in front of

him, and just as he was adding the usual retouches to his white batwing, a note came for him. I never saw that note. But Alan threw the crested blue paper and me to one side, and he didn't go out that night. With his chin in his hands and his elbows on his knee he sat, forgetful of the hours, staring into the grate, as if the embers there might heliograph some message from her to the relief of his heart.

Next evening he went to a dinner given at the residence of the British Consul, in celebration of the relief of Mafeking and in honor of Colonel Baden-Powell, and I went with him, minus the wax. No sooner had I entered the drawing-room than I heard her voice—Miss Grant's, I mean. Talking with her was Mustapha Pasha. Not far away sat Miss Price, shadowed by the same Senator. It developed that she was his niece and an heiress from Chicago. I was glad to formulate a revised version of my harsh opinion regarding the young lady, and, speaking of unnecessary noises, to be convinced that her gowns were really the only horrid thing about her, except that her father dealt in horses.

Alan seemed surprised to see Miss Grant, and more surprised half an hour later when he found he had the good luck to be seated next to her. Once he touched her hand, half by accident and half by design, but she quickly drew it away. As the ices were being served the conversation turned, rather appropriately to the course, I thought, from liberty in the abstract to marriage in the United States.

"Men are all the same," said Miss Price, oracularly.

"Only their methods differ," agreed Captain Norton.

"You mean," said Senator Lary, looking at his niece from Chicago, "that their object is the same—a woman."

"And to gain that object," laughed Miss Grant, "a man tries to make her think what she wants to think—that he is the only being on earth."

"You mean," chimed in the heiress, "that he tries to make her think that she is the only being on earth."

One of the speeches after dinner was a toast proposed by the Consul:

"To the fighters who are not on the firing line."

This was responded to by Captain Norton, who ended by saying:

"We're sorry this war was forced upon us, because we love to be at peace with all mankind. But we've fixed bayonets and shouldered our rifles, and there's no turning back. By the aid of those twenty thousand good cavalry horses from America we're now marching on to Pretoria. And, notwithstanding a subsidized lecturer and a trinity of comic opera envoys, we believe that 'Bobs' and 'Tommy' are sure to win, for, by the grace of God and the heavy artillery, England sees this through!"

The speaker had no sooner finished than a telegram came for the Consul, who read it and handed the yellow paper to Norton. Alan at once changed countenance and looked greatly depressed. I saw that the message was dated at Washington and signed Pauncefote.

Miss Grant found it necessary to depart a little earlier than the rest of the company—I suspected she wanted to. And Mr. Norton was asked by their hostess to take her home—I suspected he wanted to. The heiress from Chicago said it was not at all late, and Miss Grant urged the Captain not to come; but candidly, I believe she would have been greatly disappointed if he had not escorted her.

When they reached her house, which overlooked the Hudson, she asked him in for a few minutes. They went into the drawing-room, where only one lamp was burning.

"Cheer up," said Miss Grant, pressing the button that set a whole chandelier ablaze. "Whatever is that?"

"What?"

"That green thing nearly slipping out of your waistcoat pocket?"

"A mere trifle," Alan said, and peremptorily shoved me down. I had been gradually working my way

up. I had the same complaint that killed Cæsar.

"Your fit of the blues came on very suddenly, Mr. Norton."

"Yes," replied he; "that wire did it."

"Bad news?"

"Read it." And he handed her the telegram.

Noticing the date and signature first, she read the message aloud: "Roberts wires: Captain Alan Norton sail Saturday for Gibraltar. Get sealed orders there and ship for Beira."

"This is Thursday," he said, when she had finished and handed back the dispatch.

"You have plenty of time to get ready," she answered; "to do your packing and make your calls and all that."

"Oh, yes!" he agreed. "Lots of time."

"Don't you want to go?"

"Of course," he answered. "Though I've heard enough of those symphonies in saltpetre, and seen enough of the beastly Boers, to satisfy most men. I've been using all the influence possible," he continued, "to get to the front, but—"

"Just like a man, though; want a thing until you get it, and then—"

"Oh, it's not that."

"No?"

"Don't you understand?"

"I think it's very rude—the inference in your question. I've never before been accused of being dull."

"But—"

"In fact, you yourself have often said that for intelligence—"

"What I mean is that every moment will take me further away from you."

"Then you ought to be very thankful to the moments. They're very considerate—of me."

"What I wish to—"

"Well, there's all to-morrow left, and, if you are very good, I'll let you come up in the afternoon."

"It will be so long before I can see you again."

"You don't want to come up in the morning, do you?"

"An hour or two with you will pass so quickly."

"Don't talk like a goose. Still, it wouldn't do for you to not talk at all, would it?"

"Don't joke, now. I'm in earnest," he urged. "Nazira, I love you!"

My last doubt had gone—she must indeed be the niece of the Parisian of whom those two spoke that morning in Kimberley. The name proved it to me.

Alan put his arm around Nazira's slender waist. This movement caused me to slip out of his pocket and to fall almost to the floor; but I caught in a flounce on her skirt.

"I hear father coming," she said, removing his arm, "and you know—"

"He doesn't like me."

"So you must go now, or I can't let you come up to-morrow."

"But tell me, Nazira," he urged, "do you love me—just a little? Oh, my dear, I love you—with all my being."

"His door has opened—that's his footprint," cautioned the girl.

"Ah, tell me if—"

"Good-night. Come and see me to-morrow—Alan!"

As he took her in his arms she turned her face away, and he kissed her on the cheek.

"Nazira," commanded a stern voice, "go to your room at once!"

"Yes, father," she answered, and obeyed.

We diamonds have opportunities for intimate observations, both physical and psychological, and could, if we would, tell many secrets. With all respect to the philosophers, from Diogenes to Kant, I say that I didn't need a lantern to discover that self-admiration is the first law of feminine nature, and it's quite right that it should be so, too; for often love hinges on the cut of a garment, just as a marriage may depend on the price of wheat. On reaching the sacred chamber designated by her father, which seemed redolent with her own sweet self, Nazira went instinctively to the mirror. This led

her to two surprises: a letter with numerous post-marks on it—and poor little me.

I came in for first attention. We seem to exercise the same magnetism over a woman that curves do over a man. Picking me gently off her dress, Nazira said to herself:

"Why, this is that funny green thing—it's slipped out of Alan's pocket, after all. I wonder what it is?"

As she was smoothing the paper out she accidentally read her own name on it, and concluded there could be no harm in peeking in, to see what it contained.

"A ring—a solitaire diamond!" she exclaimed, and put me on—her dresser.

Nazira seemed to forget the letter for a few minutes, and prepared to retire. As she disrobed I could not help seeing, even if I had not wished

to, that in all her dainty lingerie there was a color scheme, pale ribbons running through the laces as on the sea the dawning light runs through the waves; this evening it was green. Turning down the coverlets and enveloping her pretty form in a gown of white silk, Miss Grant noticed the letter again. She opened it and read the pages through twice. I managed to see that the missive was dated London, and signed Cecil Rhodes. She looked down at me and stood thinking a little while, and slowly tore up the letter. I was glad, for Alan's hope was my hope. But I longed to know if I was really to belong to her. Impulsively she did something with me, and that moment I thought of Alan; it was divine to be so close to her heart and to live in the sweet glances of her alluring eyes.

Then Nazira kissed me, and turned out the light and crept into bed.



COMPENSATION

LONG as my lady flouted me the muse kept burning bright—
The more Priscilla yawned and frowned the better I could write.
I far too sorely needed funds to lose so good a hint;
One copy used to go to her, the other went—to print.

But now my lady has said "yes" each random rhyme has fled;
It puzzles me how I shall earn for two the daily bread,
For love that's scorned seems just a farce, while love requited seems
To wake in me a train of thought that ends in naught but dreams.

Priscilla asks me archly, when I thus my fate bemoan,
If I would fain recall the days when kisses were unknown?
Nay, rather, I with truth declare, than lose one dimpling smile
I'll leave to sadder souls the verse, and write in prose awhile.

ROSE ROBINSON.



IT seems a provoking paradox that a light bill can be such a heavy bill when it's a gas bill.

LIZZIE MAUD

By Estelle Lambert Matteson

EVERYTHING was going dead wrong with Lizzie Maud these days. She found no joy in her tutti frutti; even ice cream soda palled on her young taste, and real French gingham, pink-and-white shirt waists at 69 cents, marked down from \$1.19, had no charms for her.

No; life was beginning to be a problem for Lizzie Maud. All the neighbors in the tenement house where she lived missed her singing "She passed away, still loving James the same," and other ballads as touching, as she came down the uncarpeted stairs; and when she got to the store the girls all guyed her and kept asking her if she'd had a scrap with her "steady."

How could she tell them that Joe, the one she loved best in the gang, had quit his job at McSquirk's and gone down to the "Bucket of Beer" to work? It was all very well for Joe, because he made more dough down there, but what about her? He wouldn't let her come down there, 'cause it was too tough, he said, and he worked all night and she all day, so she found no joy in life.

"It's just like this, Violet Agnes," she said to the girl at her counter; "I don't know why it is, but I love Joe. Why, nowadays when I get up in the morning I feel like I'd been eating hot butter cakes, and I don't feel like coming to the store like I used to, and I am sure I don't care a rap whether your sales amount to more than mine or not."

Violet Agnes, with the tact usual to her kind, said, "Oh, don't snivel, Lizzie Maud; for God's sake, brace up! You'll soon forget about Joe, and there's plenty of fellers that cut more ice than he does."

But poor Lizzie Maud was inconsolable, and went off the floor several times during the day to have a comfortable weep all by herself. This went on for some time, till one day Lizzie Maud did not come to the store. Her counter pal was anxious, for Lizzie Maud had never missed a day before. Two, three and four days went past, till at last Violet Agnes hunted up her friend's address and went up that night to see her. She found Lizzie Maud moping on the front door stoop, with a far-off expression in her eyes and a mournful look on her face. When she saw Violet Agnes she brightened up a bit, and arm in arm they walked up and down the street, which was swarming with children.

"Say, Lizzie Maud, wat's the matter of you, eh? Are you sick, or have ye had a scrap with Joe? Why, I've missed you so to the store that it don't seem the same to me, and I'll ask to get changed to another counter if you don't get back soon. Go on, Lizzie Maud, tell me wat's the matter—p'r'aps I can help you."

By this time Lizzie Maud was in tears.

"Well," said she, "it's just this way: Joe's gone back on me, and I don't care wat becomes of me. I tell you, I can't stand it and I won't and I ain't a-goin' to."

Then Violet Agnes sympathetically pressed her friend's hand and said:

"Oh, cheese it, Lizzie Maud, or I'll be snivelin', too. Wat's the matter with him, anyway? How do you know you've been thrown down?"

"Why, my God! Violet Agnes, don't you suppose I'd believe my eyes? I'll tell you just how it was. I got so sick of never seein' Joe I thought I'd go

down to his joint and see him; so the other night I put on my best duds and curled my hair out o' sight, just the way he used to like it, and I put on my big hat—the one with the blue feather that was always so becoming. Well, when I got all fixed up I looked great, and I went down ready to do him proud. I got in all right and he was pretty glad to see me, and it wasn't for a long time that I discovered he was lookin' at the door kind of anxious like. Well, I don't know wat it was that made me jealous, Violet Agnes, but it just seemed to me that I had a terrible sore throat and I wanted to go over and put my arm around him, only he seemed far away from me and there was too many hangin' round, so I just smiled as though I was happy; but I wasn't, or maybe it was because my throat seemed sore. Well, in a few minutes the door opened, and of all the freckled, squint-eyed fluffs I ever saw, one came in. She walked up to Joe and didn't seem to pay no attention to me, and throwin' her arms around him, she says: 'Joe, if I find you talkin' to any of these female freaks from up the Bowery, I'll push your face off. I don't want no funny bizness, I don't, and if you're goin' to spiel in my class, you can't find no time to spend on other rags, see?'

"Well, I was too stunned to speak, and of course I expected that Joe would up and hand her one, but he didn't, Violet Agnes; he jest set there and hugged her up close to him, and said: 'Gee, Mag, I'll throw down anyone for you, if you say so.' Well, for a minute I thought I was a crazy loon, but I didn't want to cry before that other girl, so I just looked at Joe, and got up to go away. He says: 'Wat's eatin' you, Liz? You ain't mad, are you?' 'No,' says I to him, 'I ain't mad at you, but I never want to see you again; and if the kind of women you love best is the fluffs that hang around here, why,' I says, 'I'll see if I can't fill the bill.' There's no use a-talkin', Violet Agnes, I can't live with him and I can't live without him, so any man's the same to me,

and I ain't a-goin' back to work any more. I'm goin' up on the Bowery to-night, and I'll hit the pipe for keeps. I don't care wat becomes of me, and so here goes nothin'."

"Oh, don't talk like that, Lizzie Maud," said Violet Agnes; "you know you can't do anything like that."

She talked with her a long time and then went home. It was the last she saw of Lizzie Maud till about six months later, when she was going through Houston street to her store and saw a loudly dressed girl, who passed her by without recognition. It was Lizzie Maud.

She had degenerated rapidly, and at present was living the wild, uneasy life of the flotsam and jetsam of the district. The fever in her blood was still there, and no matter how much she drank she could not get Joe out of her mind. She hadn't seen him since the visit of which she had told Violet Agnes.

One night, having fortified herself with enough stimulant, she went down to see him. She had no fixed idea in her head when she started, but as she swung the door in she was glad he wasn't talking to any woman. She went up to speak to him, and he seemed glad to see her.

"Gee, Lizzie Maud, it's good for sore eyes to see you. I'm glad you came down. I meant to come and see you the first night I got off, so's I could explain why I acted like I did when you was here before. You see, fellers don't marry that kind of woman you saw me with, and I was only just a-jollyin' her along. It's you, Lizzie Maud, I want to marry, 'cause I know you're not the kind of a girl that would act wrong or anything."

Lizzie Maud was maudlin, but the words sobered her up. "What d'ye mean, Joe? Wouldn't you marry me if I was like that?"

"Nah; and if I married you and found it out afterward, I'd beat the face off'n you, see?"

Lizzie Maud got up and went over to him, and put her arms around him

and kissed him. Then she walked slowly out of the saloon, despite the astonished shouts of Joe. As she went away along the street she thought it all over, and the world seemed upside down. She wished she was out of it, 'cause now Joe was beyond her, and it was her own fault. She could not hope he wouldn't find it out, and she hadn't the nerve to tell him, so she'd best quit the game now, while he loved her and believed in her. No reproach was in her mind for the cause of her wrong-doing, only love and a desire to be always the best in his eyes. So she went on her weary way to her room, and wrote him a lit-

tle note telling him what she was going to do, and that she loved him so much she couldn't live without him, and—then the gas so filled the room that her head began to swim. Pretty soon poor Lizzie Maud's eyes were closing in that sleep that knows neither day nor night, and it was just then that Joe was sitting in the "Bucket of Beer" with Mag on his knee, saying:

"Well, this is how it was, darlin': Lizzie Maud came in here, and she looked like trouble, so I gave her the darnest jolly you ever heard; but it's you I love the best, see? G'wan, gimme a kiss."



WHEN MABEL GOES A-FISHING

WHEN tender June is in the land,
And wood and wold are ringing
With melody of Daphne's band,
And mating birds are singing;
When bush and tree of hill and glen
Their happy leaves are swishing
In time to Spring's sweet strains, why, then—
Then Mabel goes a-fishing!

The fly is cast; (ah, he's a fool
Who'd flee from Beauty's wounding!)
Above the silent, sun-flecked pool
The reel's shrill song is sounding;
And all the little fishes race
As fast as e'er they're able,
To kiss the ripple-mirrored face
Of cruel, winsome Mabel.

Ah, Master Walton, were you here,
Were this the River Dove,
The scene would evermore endear
To you the sport you love;
You'd idly sit, as I, *sans* doubt;
As I, would fall to wishing
That you were just a speckled trout
When Mabel goes a-fishing!

RICHARD STILLMAN POWELL.

IN THE GARDEN

THIS is the garden where she trips
 And often lightly lingers.
 The buds uplift to reach her lips,
 And failing, kiss her fingers.
 All trembling is the mignonette—
 Her trailing gown caressed it;
 All rapturous the violet—
 Her foot in passing pressed it.

The dewdrops on the peony
 Deep in their bosom hold her.
 How happy must the dewdrops be
 Thus sweetly to enfold her!
 The humming-bird, from poppies led,
 Hums an ecstatic measure,
 And, unrebuked, inclines his head
 To sip a new-found treasure.

I would I were the drop of dew
 That boldly takes possession;
 I would that, like the bird, I, too,
 Might taste without repression;
 I would I were the humblest spray
 She wears, and thrills with blisses;
 I would I were some blossom gay
 She plucks and kills, but kisses.

EDWIN L. SABIN.



A LITERAL INTERPRETATION

“IS Mr. Flashe following the hounds lately?”
 “Yes, sah,” they say he’s going to the dogs!”



HEADING OFF AN INSULT

“FROM Kentucky, eh?” said the hotel clerk, smilingly.
 “Yes, sah,” replied the man who had just registered; “but—” and there was a dangerous gleam in his eye—“I’m not a membah, sah, of the Legislatuah, sah.”

MR. VIDAVER

By Howard Markle Hoke

ON my way down to Miss Violetta Allen's cottage at the shore I knew that she and Hildah were counting the minutes until I should arrive. Miss Violetta had introduced me to Hildah at Mrs. Dalmont's reception two Winters before, and, as she claimed the full credit of our engagement, she insisted upon having us meet at her cottage so that she could have the delight of participating in the arrangements for our wedding in October. As late as that morning I had also been counting the minutes until I should see Hildah and learn all the blissful details she had planned; but when I stepped on the train I should have welcomed any excuse for postponing the meeting.

About two years before this time a financial misfortune had made it necessary for me to add materially to the income of my law practice, and I secured the attorneyship of a new corporation that had large capital and every promise of success. Relying on the flattering prospects thus opened, I had encouraged Hildah to name the date in October. But on the very morning of this Saturday that I was due at Miss Violetta's cottage our board of directors sold all our rights, privileges and franchises to an old corporation with very much more capital. It had no place for me as an attorney, and, as I would not serve in any other capacity, I had no immediate prospects except those offered by my practice, which I had sadly neglected in my devotion to the interests of the company.

Depending entirely on my success as a corporation attorney, I had been far too generous with my good salary.

The demands of the links, the gridiron and all manner of "functions" were among the speediest feathers on the proverbial wings that riches take. It was anything but a comfortable reflection on this Saturday morning that a cheque reaching a paltry distance into three figures would have called for double red lines under my bank account and hardly have paid the tailor and haberdasher and shoeman for making me presentable in October; not taking into consideration future dealings with the butcher and the grocer, and the thousand and one things necessary to keep our home from being an unpleasant transition for Hildah. This was how it came about that, instead of going down to help Hildah and Miss Violetta make all the delectable plans, I was going down to break the wretched news that our wedding must be indefinitely postponed.

"Oh, George, I am so glad you are here!" Hildah cried, after greetings and we were seated in Miss Violetta's reception-room, which was in blue, and with which I harmonized perfectly. "Now we have until Monday to talk it all over."

"And we are really, really going to make all the final plans at last," Miss Violetta chirped. "You cannot imagine how it delights me to think that I brought all this about and that I can be with you to enter into all the anticipations. Hildah has decided to have an evening wedding, George."

"With eight bridesmaids," Hildah added, "each—"

"Each carrying an armful of chrysanthemums," Miss Violetta broke in, "and—"

"And we will have a perfectly lovely reception afterward, George, with an orchestra behind palms, and—"

"And I am going up to Brynton two weeks before, George, to superintend the preparation of Hildah's trousseau—"

"And help us send out the invitations, George—"

"And I am to have the privilege of draping her veil, George—the very last thing one can do for the bride-to-be. Oh, isn't it all too lovely?"

It was lovely; far too lovely for me to ruin with my tale of woe. The worst of it was that it was so lovely I could not help catching their spirit. But I came to my senses. October was not far off. How much practice could I get in the tail end of the Summer vacation? I let them "anticipate" a while longer; then I said:

"My only fear is that something will—"

A knock interrupted, and I saw in the doorway a man who, manifestly, had no recollection of a single dismal day in all of his forty-five years. He was bowing and smiling and hoped he was not intruding in a manner that would have made him welcome anywhere. Miss Violetta assured him of her happiness, and when she had introduced Mr. Vidaver he explained how kind she had been in making the old-time friendship of their fathers the occasion for an invitation to his invalid sister and himself to spend a month with her at the shore.

"On the very first morning," he said, in his fanciful way, "Miss Allen began with the letter 'H' and spelled 'Hospitality' right along, running in several letters in one day, and—would you believe it?—she is now starting on the synonyms. Now I am going to ask a bold question. You are discussing the wedding, are you not?"

"Violetta!" said Hildah.

"Indeed, I could not keep it from him," Miss Violetta defended herself. "I brought it all about, you know."

"She has told me very little, indeed," Mr. Vidaver seconded, "so I

came in—yes, I did come in for no other purpose than to hear all about it. You'll let me stay and listen, won't you?"

"We'll be delighted," cried Miss Violetta, reading Hildah's very willing permission. "They are to be married in the church—"

"With eight bridesmaids, each carrying an armful of chrysanthemums," Hildah broke in.

Mr. Vidaver clasped his hands.

"And she will wear a perfectly exquisite gown of ivory *peau de soie*—"

"With insertions of Valenciennes lace that was worn by her mother at her own wedding."

"Superb!" cried Mr. Vidaver. "And a veil?"

"A perfect dream!" Miss Violetta exclaimed.

"Magnificent!" Mr. Vidaver declared. "I am sure I cannot make you understand how this charms me. I have never been married myself—have never been in love, in fact—but it has been the wish of my life to find a young couple who would permit me to give them my ideas on an ideal marriage ceremony. Now, do tell me all your plans."

They told him, drawing closer and closer to him until I was left entirely out of the charmed circle and forgotten. I let them go on, beginning to feel, somewhat perversely, a half-savage joy in the disappointment I had in store for Mr. Vidaver. So I waited for the moment of their enthusiasm when I thought it would deal him the worst blow, but at that very moment he sprang up in his brisk way and bowed himself out.

I decided to begin at once by pronouncing Mr. Vidaver a precious humbug, but Hildah and Miss Violetta began in a different strain. Wasn't he, now, the most delightful man they had ever met or heard of? Their time was too limited for either to wait until the other had finished. Wasn't he elegant—so refined, so unobtrusive? Did anyone ever hear such perfectly original and felicitous fancies about marriage?

"I shall ask him to go walking with

us on the beach this afternoon," said Miss Violetta, "and it will be just too lovely, Hildah, dear, to talk your wedding all over and over with him."

I decided to wait until evening.

In the afternoon it was nothing but bridesmaids and roses, and ribbons and flounces, with technical discussion of ivory satin duchesse and *mousseline de soie*, and harmonizing of shades, and church decorations and dim religious lights up the beach and down, again and again. I discovered that Mr. Vidaver's fancy had been a mere plant in the morning; gorgeous flowers bloomed upon it during that stroll.

I walked up with them and I walked down, and up and down again. I did not say a dozen words. Once I tried to change the subject to the grandeur of the waves—I might as well have tried to turn the incoming tide. Long before we returned to the cottage Mr. Vidaver was the acknowledged head of the whole business. He owned it. Miss Violetta had owned my wedding before, but she had blissfully assigned it all, right, title and interest, to Mr. Vidaver. I heard them talking about "George." "George" will walk down the right chancel steps. "George" will stand here, or there, or, better, just a little further to the right or left. I was a mere detail of the affair. I was to know my place and keep it, like a *jardinière* of chrysanthemums.

I had planned to take Hildah and Miss Violetta to a comic opera in the evening, but when I mentioned this I had due warning of what was in store when I told my story. Comic opera, when they could sit all evening listening to Mr. Vidaver burnishing the details of my wedding! Did anyone ever hear of the like? I spent most of the evening alone in one end of the parlor, thrumming the piano—which I was asked please to stop—and looking over photographs and daguerreotypes of Miss Violetta's ancestors.

Mr. Vidaver bade them good night at last, and I determined not to wait

another moment, but a glance at Hildah and Miss Violetta showed me that the time was wholly unpropitious. They were simply tired out. They would not have slept a wink all night.

In the morning I hurried down to the breakfast-room and found them already there. If the night had refreshed Mr. Vidaver as it had them, I shuddered to think of the new impetus he would give to the anticipations. When I observed that Miss Violetta was holding breakfast off until he should come down, I determined not to postpone my duty another minute, and had gone so far as to express my hope that nothing would mar our happiness, when he appeared in the doorway, quite as much refreshed as I had feared. As an inopportune intruder I voted him a triumph.

"Ah, ladies, good morning," he greeted—I must have been invisible. "What a superb Sabbath morning! At such a time our expectations of the third of October are a fairy temple bathed in the golden beams of the new day."

I had a missile that would have knocked the fairy temple into a hopeless ruin, and I felt then that I could hurl it with the precision of a crack English cricketer knocking a bail off the stumps. But I did not hurl it then, and by the time we had breakfasted I *dared* not. Mr. Vidaver had then put such a Sabbath aspect on the matter that the act would have been little short of sacrilege.

Hildah, Miss Violetta and Mr. Vidaver went to church in the morning. I am not certain whether any of them noticed that I was along or not. Mr. Vidaver was consummate everywhere. His manner was so expressive that he could make us think about the wedding when he was not talking. The rhetorical figures of his silence and pose during services were simply graphic. I could see, by means of them, the altar embowered in plants and flowers; the full-dressed ushers bringing in the guests; the white satin ribbons portioning off the pews of the elect from the casual; George Garwood coming down the

chancel steps with Charlie Tresford; and Hildah Weatherby walking up the aisle, in ivory *peau de soie* and veil, with her bridesmaids clasping clusters of chrysanthemums; could hear the "Wilt thou?" of the minister and the *dolce* of the organ. I could even see accounts of the affair in the newspapers of the next day.

On our way home Hildah consented to go walking with me on the beach in the afternoon, my plan being to lose ourselves in the crowd so that Mr. Vidaver could not possibly find us, and tell her the bad news. But at luncheon he asked what we intended to do, and Hildah could not keep our purpose from him.

"I am sorry," he said. "When Miss Allen told me you were coming down to talk over the wedding I sent for two books from my library and got them yesterday. They contain detailed descriptions, with elaborate illustrations in colors, of famous bridal costumes, including many worn by queens and empresses and ladies of the nobility. I had hoped to show you these this afternoon, but, of course, I do not wish to interfere with your plans."

As I prowled the beach alone that afternoon I sat down upon a piece of wreckwood and thought over my mis-spent life. Instead of wasting time over Blackstone and Greenleaf and Kent, and the devious ways of corporations, I should have studied marriage ceremonies as a fine art. My hatred of Mr. Vidaver became almost murderous, but in the heat of it a plan to use him flashed upon me.

At dinner I discovered that, even if time permitted a further postponement of my duty, Mr. Vidaver had brought matters to a crisis. Upon his recommendation Hildah had selected the costume of a German princess as her pattern, he having suggested a fetching modification. I decided that that was the limit of extravagant preparation, and I was about to ask him to come to my room, when he fore stalled me even in that by saying that he wished to come there after dinner to have a few words with me.

"I believe I'll call you George," he began, in his airy way, taking an easy-chair by my window. "Have a cigar?"

"No," I declined, without thanks.

"Cigarette?"

"No."

"More grumpy than I thought, George," he remarked, undisturbed. "That is just what I came to talk to you about. Since yesterday morning three of us have been flying in the high currents of marriage expectations. Something, however, has clipped your wings, George."

"Oh, I'm only the groom," I said.

"I know," he laughed, "and have made due allowance, but even grooms are permitted to have occasional gleams of happiness. Why, George, if I were to marry such a girl as Miss Weatherby I should have one foot on a rainbow and the other on a sunset; but you have been in the muggiest spell of weather I have seen for a long while. I happen to know you are not always so funereal. What ails you, anyhow?"

Then I let him have the blow I had been looking forward to giving him. I did not soften it a particle, but I got little satisfaction. He puffed coolly at his cigar, smiled with most irritating complacency, and said:

"Well?"

"Well?" I repeated. "Don't you understand?"

"Certainly, George," he said, "but what difference does it make?"

"All the difference in the world," I retorted. "It means that the wedding must be postponed. I cannot possibly afford such a wedding as Miss Weatherby has planned nor provide an establishment that would be worthy of her. I came down here to tell her and Miss Allen all about it, but you have raised their hopes to such a pinnacle that I hadn't the nerve to throw them down. You are largely responsible for my letting them go on so long, and I'm going to ask you to go down and break the bad news to Miss Weatherby. I simply can't do it."

"Of course I shall do nothing of

the sort," he said, merrily. "If you were the best man, or one of the ushers, it would be entirely different. But the groom—never, never, George."

He got up, still smiling, and went to the door with the same graphic manner I had seen in the church. But it showed me a very different scene—George Garwood, prospective groom, with two hysterical women on his incapable hands. I followed Mr. Vidaver desperately. I disliked him, but I needed his smoothness of tongue. I simply had not the courage to go down and blast feminine expectations that were at that moment soaring among pictorial representations of royal trousseaux.

He stopped at the door, studied a moment and turned around, his merriment gone.

"I'll make a bargain with you, George," he said. "I'll do my best with Miss Weatherby if you'll say something to Miss Allen that I haven't the words for. Tell her that I would be lifted into the seventh heaven if I could begin making preparations for a marriage with her. I'll take your task if you'll take mine."

"I'll do it," I said, and we went down at once.

He started for the parlor and I went into the dining-room, where Miss Violetta was putting on the last touch of tidiness. I stated Mr. Vidaver's message without preliminaries, expecting to hear her bubbling laugh; but she blushed, turned pale and began trembling so that a draw-work centrepiece she was folding caught the agitation.

"Dear me," she said, going to the table and dropping into Mr. Vidaver's chair. "He is such a fine man—but, George, what shall I say?"

"If you want my candid advice, Miss Violetta," I said, making up my mind to get even with Mr. Vidaver, then and there, for not letting me do my duty, "I would say that you are flattered, but you cannot consider his proposal. I am sorry to say that Mr. Vidaver is a sham—a humbug. You haven't had the experience of the

world that I have, Miss Violetta, and I say to you that he amounts to little more than some fine words and a few pat phrases."

How brave a fellow can be when he is getting even with the world for putting him at fault! I felt a righteous gratification in clipping the man's aspirations. But what did Miss Violetta do but rest her cheek on her right palm and look down at the table and pinch up the cloth and try to speak twice before she succeeded.

"I'm sorry you think as you do, George," she said. "I believe, though, that you are mistaken. I have known of Mr. Vidaver a long while, and he has all his life been among the very best people. Won't you please go in to Hildah now, and give me fifteen minutes to think it over? If you see him, please say that he can come here in that time."

I met him coming out of the parlor.

"You can see Miss Allen in the dining-room in fifteen minutes," I told him, with grim satisfaction over the answer he would get.

"Thank you, George," he said.

His manner was not so graphic then as it had been in the church and in my room; but in a confused way it made me imagine the scene in the parlor. He had told Hildah of my misfortune and of the miserable postponement. She had fallen to her knees on the floor as soon as he came away, and at that moment I thought I could see her sitting there, with her face buried in her hands, on a chair-seat, and crying in a way that made me hurry to the door.

I pushed the portière aside, peeped in and stopped in surprise. Instead of the distress I had pictured, Hildah was sitting at the table, poring over one of Mr. Vidaver's books and drumming upon it with her fingers as contentedly as if October third still remained the beatific date.

Vidaver had humbugged me. That was plain. I might have known it, I told myself. He had gone in, and from his insidious fancy had put some new roseate phase upon the marriage. He had made my duty harder than

ever, but it could not be put off another minute, and I went in.

"Oh, George," Hildah greeted me, "I'm so glad you came in. Isn't he too lovely?"

"Who?" I asked.

"Why, Mr. Vidaver, of course," she answered, with wide-eyed surprise.

If Mr. Vidaver had told her the truth and had wrought this peace of mind by the aid of his fancy, that fancy was supernatural.

"Hildah," I said, very solemnly, "I have had much more experience of the world—"

"Why, George, dear, what ails you?" Hildah asked. "You haven't been one bit like yourself. Everybody has spoken of it, and I noticed it as soon as you came. Even Mr. Vidaver—"

"Mr. Vidaver! Mr. Vidaver!" I cried. "Am I never to hear the last of that man?"

"Why, George Garwood! What do you—oh, I believe I see it all. Yes, that is it. It would be just like Mr. Vidaver to leave to me the pleasure of telling you."

"I don't understand at all," I said, helplessly.

"Then he has not told you," she said, proudly. "Why, George, Mr. Vidaver asked me all about you, the

prospects you had in your profession, and when I told him you were attorney for a new corporation, he said that was very good, but that many new corporations were precarious, and that you ought to form a legal connection in New York that would lift you where you deserve to be. So just think, George, he came in a few moments ago and showed me a telegram he had received from one of the great lawyers in New York saying he would accept you as his assistant on Mr. Vidaver's recommendation. Isn't it just too lovely to be true, George?"

I fell into the nearest chair; then I got up; then I fell into it again. It isn't necessary to give a further description of the confusion of a veritable ass—at the moment of discovering that he is an ass.

"And he said, George," Hildah went on, "that he knows we will enjoy living in New York, and he intimated that he might have someone over there with him that you and I like very much. I do wonder if he means dear Violetta?"

I sprang from the chair, spurred by a recollection of the tears I had caused in the dining-room. I hastily told Hildah about my idiocy, and we ran over together—but Mr. Vidaver was there and the tears were gone.



SIMULATION

WE wear our many different masks
So constantly, in different places
And different moods, it really tasks
Our memory to recall our faces.

W. L. W.



SHE DISAPPOINTED HIM

SHE—Did you ever have a girl make a fool of you?

HE—No. I wanted one to do so once, but she wouldn't have me.

CE QUI FAIT LE PLUS VITE

PASSER L'HEURE

By Leon de Tinseau

DUTRIN, quarante-cinq ans, député conservateur c'est-à-dire peu remuant.

MADAME DUTRIN, femme de sport et du précédent.

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS, bonne trentaine, veuve, jolie, élégante, décorative, très courue comme invitée.

DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE, cinquante-cinq ans, ex-officier démissionnaire, après mariage riche, habitué à faire marcher tout le monde.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE, femme du précédent, laide et méchante.

LE COMTE DU POTEAU, jeune homme chic, pas très jeune.

LARDOT, aubergiste dans un grand bourg, station de chemin de fer à trente lieues de Paris.

(Un break arrive chez Lardot, amenant les six premiers personnages, qui viennent du château de La Grange, où ils ont passé deux semaines chez les Saint-Laurent.)

LA RONCHONNIÈRE (à l'aubergiste, qui s'est avancé pour accueillir le break)—Vous avez reçu mon télégramme? Un déjeuner pour six personnes, venant du château de La Grange.

LARDOT (tout en aidant les voyageurs à descendre)—Le couvert est mis dans une chambre à part.

DUTRIN—Un bon déjeuner, j'espère?

LA RONCHONNIÈRE—L'important, ce n'est pas qu'il soit bon: c'est qu'il ne nous fasse pas manquer l'express. Quelle heure est-il?

LARDOT—Vous avez cinquante-cinq minutes.

DUTRIN—Vite à table, alors! Je n'aime pas m'empiffrer.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Vous voulez dire que vous n'aimez pas vous empiffrer vite.

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS—Moi, je me leverai de table, qu'on ait fini ou pas fini. J'ai un grand dîner à Paris ce soir, et je tiens à y être.

DU POTEAU—Moi j'ai promis à la duchesse d'Evergreen, qui passe pour retourner à Londres, de la mener aux Folies-Bergère.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Elle va bien, votre duchesse! . . . Mais elle peut compter sur ma discréction.

DU POTEAU—J'ai le regret de vous dire que son mari l'accompagne, ce qui vous donne toute liberté d'être indiscrète.

DUTRIN—Voyons, voyons! Mettons-nous à table, nous n'avons plus que cinquante minutes, maintenant.

Tous—C'est vrai. Soyons sérieux. Ne traînons pas. (Ils passent à table. On les sert aussitôt.)

MADAME DUTRIN—Quand je pense que nous avons mis deux heures pour faire vingt-cinq kilomètres! Les Saint-Laurent sont les meilleurs et les plus aimables hôtes du monde; seulement ils prétendent qu'ils attèlent en poste pour se donner le droit d'atteler des juments de ferme.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—De même qu'ils prétendent que leur château est historique, pour avoir le droit de ne pas le réparer.

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS—Si seulement ils mettaient des tapis dans les chambres! Pour mon comte, je leur pardonnerais de bon cœur cet anachronisme.

DU POTEAU—Moi je n'en demande pas tant. Mais j'aime peu qu'on se

serve d'un pichet en terre pour m'apporter mon eau chaude, et que l'eau chaude ait des yeux comme le bouillon.

DUTRIN—Où diable avez-vous pris que leur bouillon a des yeux? Quand j'avalais leur potage, il me semblait toujours que j'avalais mon rince-bouche.

Tous—Ah! quant à ça, on ne peut pas dire qu'ils ont un cordon bleu!

LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Les plats sembleraient moins mauvais, s'ils étaient mieux servis. Mais le service de La Grange, oh! la! la!

DU POTEAU—Je me demande où ils ramassent leurs domestiques. Mon valet de chambre me disait qu'on parle patois à la table des gens.

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS—Je ne sais pas comment on y parle; mais je sais comment on s'y tient. Ma femme de chambre a des bleus partout, m'assure-t-elle, à force d'avoir été pincée. Elle déclare qu'elle ne retournera plus dans cet endroit-là.

MADAME DUTRIN—Je ne promets pas que j'y retournerai. On s'y ennuie trop. La chasse y est déplorable et ils entretiennent si peu les chemins qu'on risque d'y mettre sa bicyclette en morceaux.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Pardi! Ce sont des chemins historiques. Henri IV y a passé. Nous ont-ils assez rasés avec leur Henri IV, sous prétexte qu'il a couché un soir à La Grange!

DUTRIN—Espérons que les menus étaient plus chargés que de nos jours!

DU POTEAU—Et que la châtelaine était plus jolie!

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS—Et mieux habillée!

LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Et que le châtelain avait l'air moins malheureux quand le bon Henri lui gagnait cent sous au bezigue.

MADAME DUTRIN—En somme, il est facile de voir qu'ils ne sont pas riches; mais ce n'est pas leur faute. Ce qu'on pourrait leur reprocher, c'est de vouloir inviter du monde . . . entre nous pourquoi ne pas le dire? . . . du monde au-dessus d'eux.

DU POTEAU (*agacé*)—Pas par la

naissance, toujours. C'est une excellente famille, les Saint-Laurent.

MADAME DUTRIN—Vous n'avez pas besoin de le dire; ils s'en chargent. Des écussons partout.

DU POTEAU—On ne peut pourtant pas exiger qu'ils grattent leurs propres armoiries.

DUTRIN—Non; mais on pourrait exiger qu'ils affirment une opinion politique en rapport avec leur nom. Saint-Laurent, quoi qu'il en dise, n'est qu'un rallié honteux. Vous avez pu constater, d'ailleurs, que l'aristocratie du pays les tient à l'écart. Avons-nous vu, à La Grange, une seule des bonnes familles du pays?

DU POTEAU—Croyez-moi, passons là-dessus. Nous arriverions peut-être à découvrir que les voisins de La Grange vont y reparaître, maintenant que nous sommes partis.

DUTRIN—Ils y reparaîtront quand Saint-Laurent fera mieux voter aux élections, pas avant.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE, (*à du Poteau*)—Si je ne craignais de vous causer de la peine, à vous qui prenez fait et cause pour eux!

DU POTEAU—Moi! Je prends fait et cause pour les Saint-Laurent!

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Dame! . . . Vous allez jusqu'à prétendre que c'est nous qui empêchons la noblesse de venir chez eux.

DU POTEAU—La noblesse, comme vous dites, est parfois un peu . . . exclusive, surtout en province.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Un peu exclusive et très collet monté. Qu'on ne m'en fasse pas dire davantage!

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS—Est-ce pour moi que vous parlez? Je déteste les insinuations vagues.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Pour vous! Quelle idée, chère amie! Voyons, vous allez m'obliger à être mauvaise langue. Mais enfin, tout le monde sait que Madame de Saint-Laurent . . .

DU POTEAU—Pauvre femme! Elle touche à la soixantaine. Laissez-la donc tranquille! C'est une très bonne femme.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Qui

dit le contraire? Je l'aime beaucoup. Et c'est précisément pour cela qu'elle me fait gémir . . . par ses petites faiblesses.

DUTRIN—Par "ses petites faiblesses," vous entendez le petit Colorado.

LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Ce jeune Napolitain m'a tout l'air d'un parfait espion.

DU POTEAU—Vous le surfaites. C'est tout simplement un joli rastaquouère.

MADAME LEBIGOUDIS—Non: c'est plutôt un joli enfant de chœur. Il a toujours l'air d'attendre qu'on lui dise: *Dominus vobiscum!*

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Enfin, si notre amie veut bien qu'il allume ses pauvres vieux cierges, cela ne fait de mal à personne.

MADAME DUTRIN—Pas même à Saint-Laurent, qui ne s'est jamais fort soucié de les éteindre.

MADAME DE LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Tout cela ne serait rien avec un peu d'adresse. Mais la chère bonne femme est redevenue naïve. Nous trouvons Colorado installé chez elle, nous l'y laissons. . . . Pourquoi reste-t-il après nous?

DUTRIN—Pourquoi? Hé parbleu! parce qu'il n'a pas deux louis pour payer son voyage. Tout le monde sait qu'il n'a aucun moyen d'existence, aucun moyen avouable, s'entend.

LA RONCHONNIÈRE—Vous êtes bons avec vos deux louis! Et les étrennes! C'est un déplacement fort cher. Ne me parlez pas des villégiatures au delà d'un rayon de vingt lieues. On est censé faire une faveur à ses invités; c'est une corvée qu'on leur impose. Nous voilà, maintenant, condamnés à cinq heures de train omnibus, car les express ne s'arrêtent pas dans ce fichu endroit. . . . Mais voyons (*il tape sur son assiette avec un couteau*). Il ne s'agit pas de manquer le départ. (*A Lardot, qui paraît.*) Combien de temps avant le train?

LARDOT—Le train? Il est passé depuis dix minutes!

Tous—Comment! C'est une infamie! C'est un complot! Qu'allons-nous faire? Pourquoi ne nous avez-vous pas avertis?

LARDOT—Je suis venu à la porte. Mais ces messieurs et ces dames avaient l'air de si bien s'amuser que j'ai craint de les interrompre.



THE WOOING O'T

I WOOED her—and I wearied her;
 "Ah, woe is me!" I said.
I jilted her, I flouted her—
 To-night, at six, we wed.

W. SEWARD EDMONDS.



THE CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS

OPTIMIST—I don't care what you say, marriage is one of the greatest institutions in the world.

PESSIMIST—Of course it is. It gives two people a chance to lay the responsibility for their unhappiness on each other.

THE NOVICE

THE bluest ether of the Summer skies,
 Where light clouds gather but to break again,
 When sudden sunshine follows after rain,
 Not half so wondrous is as her dear eyes.

The faint, flushed petal of the Summer rose,
 That waxes from pale pink to purest white,
 Has not the subtle sorcery to delight
 Of her sweet face, the fairest flower that grows.

Like fruit of Summer, reddening in the sun,
 Whose blood of stinging sweetness quenches thirst,
 And cools the veins with poignant heat accursed—
 Thus to enjoy her lips were death well won!

The glint of Summer sunlight in the air,
 The pungent perfume of the vesper wind,
 Has beam less bright and fragrance less defined
 Than all the golden glory of her hair.

The slow subsidence of the slumbrous sea,
 Fulfilled with languor of the Summer day,
 Has less of peace than prayers her pure lips say,
 With stainless soul turned toward Eternity.

SYLVIA FLORANCE.



HER WIFELY ENCOURAGEMENT

MRS. GAYYE—My husband gave up all his expensive habits a short time ago.

MISS BRIGHT—And how did his economical reform work?

“First rate, my dear, while it lasted. He saved up enough money the first week to buy me a new hat.”



THAT WAS ALL

HE—What made her treat me in such a shameful way?

THE SISTER—Maude meant no harm, Jack. She just got you mixed up with a fellow she's engaged to.

THE RESURRECTION OF A CONSCIENCE

By John Winwood

HE was a man who had wrested the pleasure from life as a child squeezes the juice from an orange. At twenty-one he had been turned loose on the world, with a fortune in the foreground and no God in the background but his valet. His conscience he had buried some years before, as one buries the body of a stranger whom one is sorry for and yet a trifle glad to get out of the house. He had walked the beaten path of dissipation and folly for twenty years, and was tired of its monotony. Wine and song palled upon a jaded palate and a dulled ear, and women to him were divided into two classes, those who were respectable and did not love him and those who were not respectable and did, and neither class was interesting.

It was just at this point in his career that he met a woman who was not commonplace. She was beautiful as a sunset after a stormy July day, tall, with strong, white fingers, and a mouth as red as if she had bitten some living thing and stained it; and her gowns usually needed braid at the bottom and dragged slightly as she walked.

She was the wife of a novelist and poet, who had married her because she admired his verses and, incidentally, because she was good to look at. For a month after their marriage he loved her rapturously, and wrote her sonnets, and remembered to bring her roses; then he became engrossed in his latest novel, and remembered her as one remembers a familiar bit of furniture that one is not conscious of until it is missed.

She married him because she was

dimly aware of just what rung of the social ladder he occupied; and to escape from her dreary, gray-hued life in a windy, Western town she would have married the Devil in all his scriptural regalia, if he had appeared before her with the promise on his lips of a New York habitation.

In the beginning she was ferociously happy, and she reveled in tapestries and Chinese gods and blue jars and the society of the many men and women, of more or less repute, whom her husband knew. Then he forgot her; and she scorned to remember him, and would replace without reading the loose leaves of his manuscript when she picked them up from his desk. As he was chained as securely to this desk as Prometheus to his rock, she fell into the habit of going about by herself to studio receptions and recitals and great people's "at-homes;" and many men followed her, and made love to her, but appealed to her never, though many were eager to kiss the hem of the skirt that needed braid. And she would laugh out of her uncommonplace, dark eyes and go home to her piano to sing the songs of a Guilbert with the voice of an angel.

And then the baby came, and was not welcome. There was no place for him in the apartment, among the dragons and books and Chinese gods, and she had not the passion and adoration for the scent of violet powder and the feel of the long, little garments, as delicate as the petals of a white rose, that women have who possess strong, healthy, animal souls of their own.

They gave him a fanciful, old Eng-

lish name because the poet fancied it, and he grew into a sturdy, magnificent creature, who, being a hot-house flower, had no right to so closely resemble a vigorous wild rose; and, because at an early age he wept when he was not happy, he was handed over to the care of a nurse, with whom he lived and slept, and by whom he was loved and punished, as occasion and mood prompted.

When he was three years old his mother came upon him one day asleep on the rug, with a huge Angora beside him, and decided that he was undoubtedly picturesque; and thereafter he was permitted in the drawing-room when callers came, in his best frock, in which he was miserable, and the guests fed him goodies that made him happy first and ill afterward, and all paid him the attention they might have given to a pet dog with a pink ribbon about its neck.

Among others, one night, came the man who was tired of things. He was brought there by a friend who admired the poet and had cast covetous eyes upon the woman. The man went because he had nothing better to do, because his partner at the whist-table was a fool, and because a certain lady, who had been imported from France to sing *risqué* songs that all applauded and not one in a hundred understood, and who had been wearing his diamonds for a month, had made him a scene the night before that had bored him and made him long for a change of mental atmosphere.

As they passed into the little hall of the apartment the sound of laughter and of many voices came out to them. The woman was at home and happy, surrounded by people whom she did not dislike and whom she knew admired her. A moment before the child had spilled the contents of a wine-glass upon her æsthetic gown, and had been sent from the room a trifle sharply, in spite of the guests. In a moment they had forgotten the affair, and she had set them all laughing with a careless jest, but in the

hall a small figure in a red frock was sobbing softly, with his face toward the wall.

The man who was tired almost fell over the object before he realized what it was.

"Well, well, what have we here?" he said.

He stooped and lifted the child awkwardly in his strong arms. He was a large man. The little fellow sobbed brokenly on the shoulder of his dress coat.

It gave him a strange feeling, this touch of a child in his arms. He was not given to noticing children, regarding them usually in the light of troublesome animals; but this one was so small, so trusting, so pathetic! For some reason he never could explain a strange feeling of sorrow for himself and not for the child took possession of him.

The man with the covetous eyes explained hurriedly, and besought him to put the "brat down and come along," but the man who was tired hesitated.

"You go on," he said; "I'll follow in a minute."

His friend went on into the room whence the laughter came, and the man who was tired sat down on a Turkish divan with red cushions and put the crumpled little creature on his knee. In time he extracted the information that the tears were on account of being sent away before the "cakies" arrived; that he had not gone to Margaret as he had been told, because he wished to cry, and Margaret "spatted" him when he cried; that this red frock was his best; that he was three years old and a man—all which proved as strangely delightful to his auditor as the odor of a beautiful, strange flower to a horticulturist.

Then came the white-capped nurse, reproof in her eye, to lead him bedward; and the child, being usually philosophic, went meekly enough. Though he was unused to kisses, because perhaps his baby heart was grateful, he lifted a chubby, wistful face to the man, who started as if

he had been stung, and, after a slight hesitation, kissed him lightly, as if he feared his lips would burn.

Then he went into the drawing-room, under the red shades and antique tapestries, and did not like his hostess, who looked upon him with favor and smiled upon him through her dark lashes. He was bored again, and a trifle disgusted with himself for the feeling he carried away from the hall. His conscience might have been turning in its grave, perhaps.

Then the woman who was not commonplace did a commonplace thing. She fell in love with a man who had no love to give her, and behaved badly in consequence. The man did not notice it for a long time, because, when he called again, his attention was drawn from her to a small creature in a red frock who crawled from behind a chair when he entered and demanded goodies, shrieked when he was torn away from him, and smiled in rainbow fashion when the man expostulated and set him on his knee as on a throne. And the woman, who was wise in her generation, although she had committed the foolish sin of falling in love like a milkmaid, saw the attraction the man and the child had for one another, and traded largely upon it. She used the child, as she would wear a ribbon or a bewitching gown, to attract the man. She made much of the child when the man who was tired called, and would ask his advice concerning him with pathetic, uplifted eyes. A Phryne endeavoring to assume the expression of a Madonna!

But the man believed. The little apartment began to have a strange attraction for him. His steps turned unconsciously toward it in the evening a half-hour or so before the child's bedtime. He would catch himself watching the queer, crawling toys with which the fakirs encumber the earth, and buying them, moreover—which fact caused passers-by who knew him to regard him with both amusement and suspicion. He scarcely realized the hold the little smiling creature had taken upon him.

There have been prisoners, snatched red-handed from their crimes, who have watched and guarded and loved a wild flower springing from a crevice in their cell. So for half a year affairs slipped by in an uneventful train, and the woman in the background grew impatient.

This man seemed deaf to her voice, that dropped into the minor tone of tenderness when he entered, and to the unveiled glance that said: "Be bold and—be rewarded." Because of these things she held her life and her heart in her open hands, saying: "Take." Moreover, she was jealous of the child—so jealous, that when he came to say good-night one certain evening, with red, uplifted lips and happy, sleepy eyes, she could have tightened her slender fingers about his throat and laughed to see him strangle in her grasp because the man had kissed him, not her.

After the boy had gone she walked to the window restlessly and threw back the curtain. Outside the snow was falling, and the dizzy wind drove the flakes here and there until they appeared to hold the world in a great white net. Inside, the red lamps were lighted and the fire glowed brightly in the grate. The novelist was absent in a peppery, Southern climate, cabling war news to a journal that would print his name in large type and his information in small.

They were alone. The woman was dressed for conquest. There was a red rose on her naked shoulder, and the green leaves shone against her breast like live emeralds and held the eyes like stars, and about her, too, that night, clung the vague, intangible something the devil puts about a woman as a garment when he spreads her as a net to catch the senses of man.

But this man sat looking into the fire thoughtfully, an unlighted cigarette held carelessly between his fingers. He looked at the woman by the window and smiled.

"The little chap was happy tonight, wasn't he?" he said. "I dare say you'll laugh, but I couldn't man-

age to tell him what I came to do. I go West with Van Sittart in the morning—some nonsense of his about railroads—and I declare I found it hard to say good-bye to the little fellow. You'll do it for me in the morning, perhaps; women are better than men at these things."

The woman turned sharply from the window and made a sudden step toward him.

"You are going away?" she said; "going away?"

"For a month or so," said the man. "You will tell the child?"

The woman did not answer. She came close to him, in the red light of the fire, and laying her hands upon his arm, lifted her face slowly.

"Do not go," she said.

He looked at her in surprise.

"Why?" he asked.

"Because I love you," she said, "and—because you love me."

The room, with its antique tapestries and grinning Chinese gods, swam before his eyes, and an almost overwhelming impulse seized him to draw her to his arms and keep her there. It was so easy for a man to do whose conscience was dead and who had no God in the background. But he stood very still, and, being a gentleman, lied bravely.

"So you have found it out?" he said. "I am not clever. I thought that by going away—I did not know you cared—"

She threw her arms about his neck and drew herself into his unwilling embrace.

"I love you!" she whispered; "I love you!"

Some sweet, bewildering perfume seemed to emanate from her; she acted upon his senses as a draught of intoxicating wine bewilders the brain. Still he made no sign, but the muscles of his mouth were strained and tense.

"And your husband?" he said.

She laughed a cruel, happy laugh. "We are nothing to each other," she said. "I owe him no debt that was not paid long ago, and—I love you."

From the nursery came the sleepy cry of a dream-awakened child. The

man started violently and half-withdrew his arms. "And the child?" he said.

The woman frowned. "Why, nothing of the child!" she said. "He is so young; he notices nothing. Oh, beloved, let us be happy!"

Still the man hesitated. "But you are his mother," he said. "For God's sake, realize that! You are his mother, and you love him."

"I loathe him!" said the woman who was not commonplace.

The man stared at her in silence, surprised, unbelieving; and she endeavored to cover her mistake. She threw herself at his knees; she covered his hands with kisses; she brought the beauty men had worshipped to bear upon him; by turns she was a Delilah, a Marguerite, pathetic, alluring.

The perspiration stood in drops upon the man's forehead. He did not look at the woman, but stared over her head at the wall.

"To-night," he said, "I held him in my arms; I kissed him when he left us. I am not a good man, and, in my time, I have betrayed many who trusted me; but this thing I cannot do. I cannot wrong the child."

He drew a long breath; the color came back to his face. He raised the woman gently to her feet. "Good-bye," he said; "I am going. Some day you will thank me for this."

The woman stared at him in amazement, anger and grief strangely mingled in her face. "And for the sake of that child, that baby," she said, "you are leaving me?"

The man said nothing, but walked slowly toward the door. If the woman had been an ordinary person she would have become a beautiful Fury at this time; not being commonplace, she laughed long and bitterly.

"All of his life," she said, "I have never loved him—from the time he was laid a little, crying animal in my arms. Think how I must love him now!"

She turned proudly and swept from the room. In a moment she entered again, still with that mocking smile

on her red mouth, while in her arms she held the child, dazed and bewildered at being snatched from his sleep, with his fair hair tumbled and his cheeks flushed.

She placed him roughly on the broad divan and drew back a pace.

"Since you love him so," she said, slowly, "say good-bye to him. A month is a long time!"

"What do you mean?" said the man.

She frowned at him under the heavy lashes of her angry eyes.

"I said I never loved him," she answered. "Now for him the only person I have ever loved has humbled me in the dust, and—I do not intend to be reminded of it."

The child had gone back to sleep as peacefully as on the breast of a mother who loved him. To the man's excited fancy the long night-robe appeared like a little shroud. A dozen confused thoughts whirled through his brain, and, as if revealed in a lightning flash, shone the consciousness that the world for him held nothing dearer than this one small, sleeping figure.

The overwhelming, manly desire to protect possessed him. The child was so small, so innocent, so helpless!

"You mean to send him away?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "Anywhere out of my sight. People will do anything for money, and I do not care where he goes, only let it be out of my sight and life."

"His father?" said the man.

The woman smiled bitterly. "Will neither know nor care," she said. "If

the child is nothing to me, it is less to him."

The man stooped suddenly and took the small figure in his arms. His face was white, but there was the light of a great purpose in his eyes.

"Give him to me," he said. "I do not ask, I demand!"

"As well you as another," she said; but her eyes were on fire.

The man laid his face over the child and woke him gently.

"Will you go with me, dear?" he said. "Are you willing to go away from your home, a great way from here, and stay with me forever?"

The child regarded him curiously with wide, startled eyes. Then he laid his head gently on the man's shoulder with a little sigh of content. "Yes," he said, simply, "me go wif you."

The man wrapped him in his overcoat, and, without another look at the woman, went down the steps and out into the snow.

A great peace had settled on the earth. The moon through a lattice of jagged clouds checkered the world with silver stars. Into their light he walked with his burden, as into the light celestial.

The woman who was not commonplace sat and gazed into the dead coals with eyes that seemed able to relight them, and her mouth more than ever was as red as if she had bitten some living thing and stained it.

For an hour or so she stared into the gray heart of the ashes. Then she yawned and went to bed.



THE PENANCE

HIS haughty face had naught to fascinate; In fact, 'twas ugly as the soul within; And yet the maiden stood, with eyes dilate, As if a young Apollo he had been. "Pray," questioned he, "why dost thou gaze at me?" She said: "This morn mine eyes committed sin, And 'tis their penance that they look at thee!"

GEORGE BIRDSEYE.

JACK'S SECOND TRIAL

THE second time that Jack proposed
 "Twas really a surprise,
 Though still I—gossips so supposed—
 Found favor in his eyes.
 His first avowal, months before,
 I'd treated with disdain,
 And laughed at him the while he swore
 He'd surely try again.

The second time that Jack proposed
 I never said a word,
 Though to assent I'd grown disposed—
 I simply overheard
 By accident his earnest plea
 While in the waltz's whirl;
 The second time 'twas not to me,
 But to another girl!

ROY FARRELL GREENE.



A HAPPY OUTCOME

GILFOYLE—Kilduff's elopement wasn't successful, was it?

POINDEXTER—Oh, I don't know. The old man caught them before they reached the minister's.



THE PHILOSOPHY OF MISERY

HE—I don't believe in too much happiness.

SHE—Why?

"It unfits a man for married life."



BORES EVEN HIMSELF

BELLE—Is Chappie tiresome?

FLORA—Is he? Why, they say he yawns incessantly when he's alone.

AN AUTOMOBILE ELOPEMENT

By Alex. Ricketts

“**D**ID I ever tell you about the first automobile elopement I ever heard of?” asked the Judge, stirring it.

“No,” I replied, sipping it. “What was it?”

“Well,” said the Judge, tasting it, “it was like this: A chap named Jimmison was in love with old Wagonhorst’s daughter Estella, and she was in love with him, but the old man wouldn’t hear of their getting married, all on account of Jimmison having bought an automobile. You see, old Wagonhorst was a famous breeder of horses, and, naturally, automobiles stuck in his craw; and he not only regarded Jimmison as a dangerous competitor in business, but he hated him for having dared to introduce one in the neighborhood.

“Of course, they tried all kinds of arguments and coaxings on the old man, but he was obdurate—said he’d a darned sight rather inoculate his stud with glanders, and be done with it, than have that automobile maniac one of his family—so there was nothing for the lovers to do but to poison the old man or elope.

“Jimmison stood strong for the latter alternative, but Estella cried and hesitated, and said she would and she wouldn’t, until Jimmison, pretty near distracted and quite desperate, fired her ambition by pointing out the fame she would acquire by being the first girl that ever eloped in an automobile. Then she consented.

“Well, getting Estella, all blushes and tears and tremors, safely down the ladder and loaded into the automobile, with all her bandboxes and bundles and parcels, besides knowing

how handy her old man was with a shotgun, kind of made Jimmison nervous, and when at last he started out of the yard, instead of scooting quietly and harmlessly through the gate he jammed the steering-gear somehow, and went crashing through the fence, and the racket woke up old Wagonhorst.

“Like all horsemen, he was a quick-witted old chap, and in less than five minutes he was pounding along after them on the fastest and fiercest mare he had in his stables.

“Along sky-hooted the automobile, and about half a mile behind thundered old Wagonhorst, and neither of them could gain an inch. Mile after mile rocketed by, and I reckon they’d be going just like that yet if, right at the top of the hill, overlooking the parsonage where Jimmison had expected they’d be made one, the automobile hadn’t slowed up and stopped. Balked dead right then and there.

“Well, what with soothing Estella’s hysterics, watching the old man coming for him like an infuriated avalanche, speculating on how long it’d take the doctors to pick a bushel or two of duck shot out of his anatomy, and swearing properly at his luck, Jimmison wasn’t exactly in shape to give the automobile’s mechanism that careful and critical attention it demanded, and just as old Wagonhorst came up, yelling and swearing and gloating and jeering, he loosened something he ought not to have touched, when there was a tremendous *bang!* and a cloud of steam shot right plumb into the mare’s face.

"Old man Wagonhorst might a good deal more profitably have tried to soothe and stop a cyclone than that mare. Jimmison and Estella watched him ecstatically as he left the county at a rate that made him look like a black streak across the landscape. After he was out of sight they strolled down to the parsonage and were comfortably married.

"And when the old man got back,

several days later, he found them all settled down, waiting for him to forgive them, which he did on the spot, thinking that Jimmison had scared the mare on purpose. He said that any fellow as cool-headed and resourceful as that in an emergency was a credit to the family, even if he was nothing but a lawyer instead of a horseman, and a little flighty on the subject of automobiles."



BALLADE OF SEASONABLE DIVERSION

WHEN Spring comes laughing down the lanes,
And crocuses begin to blow,
And new life surges in my veins,
A-saddle o'er the hills I go;
I fish the pools the big trout know;
I watch the robins nest anew;
I work with Nature, plough and sow,
But, most of all, I think of You.

I count the Summer's ripening gains;
I sail, I swim, I ride, I row;
I follow Autumn's harvest wains;
I watch the southward-flying crow;
I loose the dogs against their foe,
The red fox, and the deer pursue;
I take what Nature may bestow,
But, most of all, I think of You.

When Winter's frost is on the panes,
And in the house the bright fires glow,
Snug-sheltered from the snows and rains
I set the frothing ale aflow;
I idle with my resined bow;
I dream behind the smoke-wreaths blue;
I read the books of long ago;
But, most of all, I think of You.

L'ENVOI

Love, life is sweet from Spring to snow,
And brings me joys the long year through;
I give them honor, high and low,
But, most of all, I think of You.

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.

A NEW VOCATION

By Douglas Dunne

THE little flat looked very gay that day. Boxes of pansies were blooming impertinently in the window. There was a new song on the piano; there were roses in a vase and new magazines on a table; and there was a new novel in the hands of a young woman wrapped in a kimono of black and gold, and reclining on a rug-covered, cushiony couch.

Bright bits of water color framed in white, Gibsons in black and nobodies in *passe partout*, gave a certain gypsyish character to the room. Then there were no canary and no rubber plant. Despite its vagabondish lack of these, however, the room was evidently that of a student. Famous dictionaries in cases were in evidence, books of reference, histories, and volumes the labels of which denoted a fondness for abstruse subjects.

The bell rang, and the maid ushered in a tall, athletic-looking young man, with the 'varsity stamp upon him. The lapel of his coat bore the pin of one of the most exclusive secret societies of a famous college.

The girl rose to her feet with a look of annoyance at the maid. "You brought no card," she said. "May I ask—?"

"It was my fault," said the young man. "I beg your pardon, but I was afraid you wouldn't see me, as you don't know me."

"No, I don't. Who are you, please?"

"John Doe." He smiled.

"Well, you want—?"

"The usual thing."

"Oh!" The girl's face brightened. "You're the first man," she said.

"Yes? I suppose you are surprised; but my sister told me about you. She's at Holy Smoke. I'm on the Crew at mine—and the fact is, there's no time to train and—you understand—?"

"Perfectly."

The girl went to a desk and picked up a pad and a pencil.

"Now if you'll give me an outline?" she said.

"I'd rather leave it to you."

"Oh, I must get some idea of your views."

"Haven't any, except on athletics."

"Do you want it athletic?"

"Great Scott, no! The governor thinks it interferes with studies, and I just scraped through the exams. I want this to be an intellectual corker —high up—far off. Catch on?"

The girl scribbled and nodded. "Like to touch on politics at all—the wars and so forth?"

"Just a bit. I don't want anything they'll be likely to rubber about afterward. I'd rather have it more indefinite."

"How would the achievements of the twentieth century do? That's all guessing, you know, but it's effective when it's done in good shape."

"That's it. Put lots of language in it. That'll tickle dad. But I want to stagger him at the same time, see? And say, no quotations. I don't know one, and it would give me dead away."

"Very well. About four thousand words?"

"Oh, the devil—that is—are they as much as that?"

"That's the average. Shall I mail it?"

"No, I'll come and get it. The real thing, remember. Now, your terms—"

"Are in advance, you know."

"So Sis told me—er—"

"Two hundred dollars."

He counted out twenty new tens. "I thought you'd like it in real money," he said, laughing.

"Thanks." The girl opened a safe in the top of the desk and packed the bills in with difficulty. It was full of money. The young man looked at her in amused surprise as she nonchalantly pushed the safe door to and clicked the lock.

"Busy day?" he said, grinning. "Say, I'd give a lot to have your reputation. Your name's a household word in every college in the country."

"The season's so awfully short," said the girl; "that's why I have to charge so much. But there are ever so many graduates, and they must have essays."

"And can't write 'em?"

"Or haven't time," she said, politely.

"By the way," he said; "could you give me a card? Perhaps some of the boys—"

She took half a dozen from a pigeon-hole and slipped them into an envelope that she gave him. He took one out and read:

MISS ALVA SCRIBBLEMORE,
CONFIDENTIAL COLLEGE AMANUENSIS.

Terms Strictly in Advance.



ENCOURAGEMENT

HE—Would you object seriously to my kissing you?

SHE—Well, you see, I must resist on general principles, but then—I'm not very strong.



INVESTIGATING TOMMY

GOOD night, mamma, put out the light,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep—
I mean to lie awake all night,
To see just how I go to sleep.

M. S. P.



A VERY SICK WOMAN

NEWLYWED—What is the matter with my wife, doctor? Anything serious?

DOCCTOR—Yes; she said she married you for your money, and you didn't have any.